DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 310 245 CE 053 046

AUTHOR	Kinneavy, Tom
TITLE	The Outreach College. Design and Implementation.
INSTITUTION	Further Education Unit, London (England).
REPORT NO	ISBN-1-85338-133-0
PUB DATE	89
NOTE	126p.; Document contains colored type.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Adult Education; Adult Programs; *Community Education; *Community Involvement; *Dislocated Workers; Foreign Countries; *Outreach Programs; *School Community Programs
IDENTIFIERS	*Great Britain

ABSTRACT

This document describes a project conducted by Britain's Further Education Unit, at Cleveland Technical College in Redcar, England, to deliver adult education for the unemployed in local community facilities. The report is intended to help college administrators who are interested in delivering college programs for adults on an outreach basis. The document consists of seven chapters, a nine-item bibliography, the names of those who steered the activity, and five appendices. The document reports the background of the project; changes undertaken to develop a more community-based perspective; and the methodology of a qualitative and quantitative needs assessment conducted among traditional nonparticipants in adult education. An outline of a model community-based local learning center for outreach is included. Design elements are evaluated in relation to the delivery of four outreach modules pilot tested. A framework for staff development is offered. The nature of the relationship between the college and the community is examined, with a community-led as opposed to provider-led view of outreach recommended. The appendices contain a copy of the needs assessment survey questionnaire, course evaluation instruments, post-course interview schedules for students and department heads, an interview with a student who had severe learning disabilities, and recommendations regarding further education for adults with severe learning disabilities. (CML)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED310245

THE OUTREACH COLLEGE

Design and implementation

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

D Drysdale

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

CE053046

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

- REPLAN is a programme to promote the development of education opportunities for the adult unemployed.

- REPLAN aims to help those who provide education by identifying and publicising the most effective ways and means of meeting the educational needs of the unemployed, and by encouraging closer collaboration between the various providing agencies.

- The programme is funded by the Department of Education and Science and the Welsh Office; certain elements of the programmes are also supported financially by the Training Agency. On behalf of REPLAN, the FEU and National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) are managing complementary programmes of development projects and NIACE is employing and managing an advisory team of field officers led by a national co-ordinator.

- Staff development programmes are being organised by NIACE in collaboration with the Regional Advisory Councils for Further Education, with participants drawn from a wide range of institutions and agencies in the statutory and voluntary sectors.

- Education Support Grants have been allocated to many local education authorities to strengthen the planning and co-ordination of provision for unemployed adults in their areas.

- For further information on REPLAN, contact:

■ The REPLAN Office (DES)	Tel 01-934 0612
■ Adult Training Promotions Unit (DES)	Tel 01-934 0888
■ Martin Johnson (FEU)	Tel 01-321 0433
■ Tony Uden (NIACE)	Tel 0533 551451

THE OUTREACH COLLEGE

Design and implementation

Tom Kinneavy
Project Co-ordinator

CONTENTS

Foreword iii

1. Background to the project 1

2. An analysis of the educational needs of unwaged adults 6

3. A curriculum design for outreach 24

4. Delivery and evaluation 31

5. Institutional support 54

6. College to community 68

7. Recommendations 79

Bibliography 82

The Project Steering Group 83

APPENDICES

A Outreach project survey questionnaire 84

B Course evaluation instruments 90

C Heads of department interview schedule 96

D 'Monday was Joe's day': Adults with severe learning difficulties and outreach FE 98

E Guidelines for setting up a network 106

FOREWORD

This FEU REPLAN project (RP417) was concerned with identifying the most appropriate ways to take further education and training out into the community and to deliver it in local community facilities. The project was based at Cleveland Technical College in Redcar. This report describes the experience and process involved in the project.

Chapter 1 gives a background outline of the area, college and project methodology. It describes how the initial strategy had to be revised in the light of subsequent events and how an alternative approach was devised which helped the project develop a more community-based perspective on outreach.

Chapter 2 is concerned with needs analysis. Both quantitive and qualitative methods were adopted to survey the needs of unwaged adults. The content and conclusions of this research provide a detailed insight into how different groups of unwaged people view colleges, further education and their own needs. Many of the participants in the survey were traditional non-participants in FE, whose views, therefore, are valuable to many institutions which are attempting to reach this client group.

Chapter 3 offers a theoretical discussion on some key curriculum design features for outreach provision. The discussion also extends to give an outline of a model of a community-based local learning centre for outreach delivery.

Chapter 4 gives an account of the delivery of outreach provision. Although developed specifically for outreach work, much of the content and discussion is also relevant for main site teaching activities. Links are made between outreach education and college organised/delivered courses, particularly in the areas of modularisation and progression. A strategy for the identification of suitable community-based facilities for outreach delivery is set out. The design elements discussed in Chapter 3 are then evaluated in relation to the delivery of four out of the five outreach modules piloted in the project.

Chapter 5 moves back to the college to consider the nature and extent of the institutional support, including staff development, which is necessary in order to establish outreach as an effective branch of overall college provision. The content of this chapter monitors the attitudes of senior college management to outreach from the early stages of the project through to its maturity, which included en passant an administrative restructuring of the college. Staff development is discussed in the context of various constraints on staff in delivering provision in outcentres which are often not traditionally associated with educational activities. Such problems and possible solutions are illustrated with examples from the modules piloted. Finally, a staff development programme was implemented at Cleveland Technical College through the project, and this is offered to other institutions as a suggested framework for adapting or adopting.

Chapter 6 examines the nature of the relationship between the college and the community. In particular it develops a view of outreach which is community-led rather than provider-led, and

describes how, during the project, perspectives shifted. The emerging perspective on education and training in the community is characterised by the joint, equal and active involvement of different agencies operating in a particular locality through a collaborative approach in the organisation and resourcing of specific outreach provision to meet specific needs. The chapter takes the view that such community-led and collaborative initiatives highlight the need for effective networking between providers and local groups. Finally, the point is strongly made that, since outreach *development* work is heavily time consuming, even before delivery becomes a reality, institutions and local education authorities must fully resource the role of a college outreach co-ordinator as an essential prerequisite to the establishment of good practice.

The report should be of particular relevance to college senior managers and middle managers who are interested in expanding college provision for adults, particularly on an outreach basis.

Elizabeth Weightman
Development Officer
Further Education Unit

BACKGROUND

ECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

Cleveland Technical College was opened in 1857 and serves the Langbaurgh-on-Tees Borough in the County of Cleveland. It is made up of three clearly distinguished areas with similar populations but very different densities of population. In the North-West are the districts of Grangetown, South Bank and Cargo Fleet. These areas grew around the heavy steel industry on the south bank of the River Tees. The nationalisation of companies such as Dorman Long and the subsequent denationalisation of the steel industry have caused the closure of many of the steel-making and processing plants and their associated suppliers and traders. The unemployment rate in this area is 23.1% (28.8%). (Throughout, unemployment figures are for July 1988; the figures in parentheses refer to January 1987, when the research project commenced.) The area qualifies for 'inner urban area status'.

Surrounding this area is a ring of small towns such as Eston, the market town of Guisborough, and the seaside resorts of Saltburn and Redcar, where the college is situated. This area is primarily residential, but includes the modern British Steel Corporation (BSC) Lackenby integrated steel complex and the ICI Wilton Works. Whilst a significant number of residents are associated with the steel and petrochemical industry, many commute to the commercial centre of Teesside in Middlesbrough and other centres of employment in Cleveland. The unemployment rate in this area is 13.5% (18.1%).

The eastern part of the borough (over half of the area) is made up of numerous large villages such as Brotton, Loftus and Skelton, and the old ironstone-mining villages typified by Boosbeck, Lingdale, Liverton and Charltons. This area includes some of the North Yorkshire Moors National Park at its fringe, many signs of the ironstone mining which brought work at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, and high-quality agricultural land used for mixed farming. The unemployment rate in this area is 11.6% (15.4%) and much of the area qualifies for 'rural development area status'.

Lanbaurgh-on-Tees is unique as a borough qualifying for both inner urban and rural development aid programmes. The overall unemployment rate is 14.5% (19.1%).

THE COLLEGE AND THE PROJECT

Cleveland Technical College continues to provide traditional general and pre-vocational education. However, it has had to change from being the provider of education and training to support the major and satellite companies of BSC and ICI Wilton, to become the provider of support to a much smaller and more varied industrial base and to the large unemployed population of the area. Many of the unemployed have had no contact with education since they left school, which they did confident of getting a job, and believing that this situation would hold for the whole of their working lives.

Under the 'Wider Opportunities Training Programme' of the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) (now the Training Agency) the college has been a leader in the programme which, within the North-East of England and Cumbria, is known as SCOPE.

The college's own programme has operated since September 1984, in liaison with the local Jobcentres and Community Programme (CP) agencies. The programme consists of a four-day induction, including job-sampling, followed by a choice from a series of client-negotiated, vocationally specific modules.

The whole project was to operate in close collaboration with the MSC since it was thought likely that the majority of people would take the first few units relevant to themselves under the SCOPE programme with which the college had an increasing involvement in 1984-5 and to which it was fully committed at the time this research project commenced.

Courses suitable for the new clients that have been advertised in the traditional ways and delivered at the college have had a fairly poor response, and the college's effect has in the main been limited to the immediate area of Redcar itself. It is thought that the main reasons for this are:

- the prohibitive costs of public transport;
- the inconvenience and infrequency of public transport;
- that, in spite of its name, the college is seen as catering for Redcar only;
- that the public are not aware of what the college has to offer to them!

Some initial research undertaken at the start of the Outreach project was to compare the extent of take-up of college-based provision by the unemployed (including other categories of disadvantaged adults who were also eligible for remission of fees) from the different parts of East Cleveland which make up the college's catchment area. The statistics in Table 1 confirm the view that unwaged adults are much less likely to take college-based learning opportunities if their home location is outside Redcar (the locations in the table range from 6 miles west of the college to 12 miles east of it).

AIMS OF THE PROJECT

The project was intended to seek the most appropriate ways of taking learning opportunities to the people instead of taking people to provision. In particular, it aimed:

- to make comparisons between the perceived and real educational needs of long-term unwaged people;
- to identify the problems and establish appropriate strategies for use with the local community and unwaged adults in the creation of local learning opportunities;
- to design and implement the delivery of education and training programmes in traditional and non-traditional centres;

- to develop strategies and train staff to deliver education in non-specialist out-centres, including redundant plant in schools, and to exercise total responsibility for management, teaching, counselling and guidance within the centre;
- to define and evaluate the design specification for modules to be delivered at out-centres.

METHOD: INITIAL STRATEGY OF THE PROJECT

The programme was to be undertaken by a research worker assisted by a team of 5-10 workers, employed for the duration of the project by Langbaurgh Borough Council under the Community Programme Scheme. They would, in any case, be drawn from the community in which they lived and in which they were to work. This strategy was intended to assist their acceptance within the community and would help them to understand the attitudes of the people whom they were hoping to reach. The research worker was an existing member of the college staff, who had co-responsibility for delivering the SCOPE programme.

The research worker and team of assistants would assess the educational and training needs of unemployed adults by using a needs analysis questionnaire together with group discussion research methods. The results of this first phase of the project would be used in the next stage to identify, design and deliver a number of outreach learning modules in a variety of out-centres. The evaluation of outreach modules would audit changes in attitudes as a result of outreach education and training of adults. A curriculum design checklist would be compiled together with gudelines for the management and delivery of outreach work.

THE MSC

Central to this initial strategy was the recruitment of a team of CP workers to assist with the implementation of a needs analysis questionnaire and the collation of the data gathered. This team was also to function as a bridge to the unemployed: it would link the college to the community by working within targeted areas, being based in local community facilities and making contact with the unemployed. However, it became apparent early in the life of the project that this strategy of recruiting a CP support team would not be endorsed by the MSC.

METHOD: REVISED STRATEGY

The MSC's rejection of the CP submission could have dealt a severe blow to the outreach project. During the intervening period the research worker had been making initial visits to community centres and other facilities used by local residents, especially the unemployed. Contact was also being made with individuals, local groups and other agencies in order to publicise the project. An alternative strategy began to develop out of these meetings and visits. The strategy which emerged was based on working with and through local groupings — statutory and voluntary — in order to attempt to identify and assess needs, respond to those needs by outreach delivery, and thus reach unwaged adults in their local communities. Chapter 6 sets out this approach in detail and describes how the project developed a community-led perspective on outreach from contact and

sustained communication with local groups. With hindsight, the MSC's rejection of the submission for a group of CP workers was to the benefit of the project.

It is felt that, had the initial strategy gone ahead, with CP workers under the supervision of the college acting as the main vehicles for contacting the unemployed, only minor involvement would have been sought from groups and agencies active in their communities. This might well have confirmed a view of the college by the local community as a distant entity that had little direct relevance to people's needs and which was largely distinct from other community-based activities. As it happened, the rejection of the CP submission had the effect of sharpening the attention of the project much more towards the life and activities of local communities. It helped in the development of a view of outreach which sees the college as a community resource responding to needs articulated by the local community and — in partnership with other agencies jointly — contributing experience and resources to outreach work.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

The outcome was to be a report to the Further Education Unit (FEU), suitable for consideration for publication, which would include:

- an analysis of the needs of unwaged adults;
- an analysis of the problems and possible solutions in the use of out-centres for delivery of education and training to adults;
- a curriculum design checklist for course modules;
- guidelines for the management and delivery of outreach work;
- a number of units of learning which had been field-tested in a variety of settings;
- a self-evaluation questionnaire to be used in the selection and design of course modules;
- an account of the processes of the project.

Table 1: Cleveland Technical College: Take-up of college-based provision by the unemployed from various locations in East Cleveland in the academic year 1986-7.

Location	Average unemployment (%)	Participation on remission-on-fees basis[a]			Unemployed persons[b]	Participation ratio, in FE provision		
		Overall	Male	Female		Overall	Male	Female
Guisborough	12.1	52	34	18	1,101	1 in 21	1 in 23	1 in 18
Brotton	14.1	9	5	4	327	1 in 36	1 in 45	1 in 25
Loftus	18.7	18	7	11	362	1 in 20	1 in 37	1 in 9
Skelton	16.8	14	6	8	462	1 in 33	1 in 55	1 in 16
Eston	19.3	23	14	9	769	1 in 33	1 in 44	1 in 20
South Bank	39.2	7	5	2	1,156	1 in 165	1 in 191	1 in 19
Redcar	**21.1**	**331**	**153**	**178**	**3,475**	**1 in 10**	**1 in 17**	**1 in 5**
Totals	20.18 (average)	454	224	230	7,652	1 in 45 (average) 1 in 51 (average excl. Redcar)	1 in 59 (average) 1 in 66 (average excl. Redcar)	1 in 27 (average) 1 in 31 (average excl. Redcar)

a) Enrolments also include those in receipt of a variety of welfare benefits and are not restricted to those in receipt of unemployment benefit.

b) 'Unemployed persons' are the registered unemployed.

2. AN ANALYSIS OF THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF UNWAGED ADULTS

There are a number of factors that prevent adults taking advantage of the facilities that are currently provided by both statutory and voluntary organisations. The following list of 'Barriers to Access' was compiled in 1985 by Paul McGee, the then Education Support Grant (ESG) Development Officer for Cleveland County Council. Much of the content of this chapter lies within the context of these 'barriers'.

- inadequate information about all the educational facilities that are available;
- a belief that qualifications or age restrict entry to courses;
- a belief that costs will be high or indeed that benefits will be lost;
- deep-seated attitudes against education and a lack of realisation of the potential benefits of education/training;
- a poor understanding by providers of the educational needs and wants of the unemployed;
- a gap between the provision of courses/schemes and the needs of the unemployed;
- poor liaison between agencies providing education and training;
- geographical distance between the homes of the unemployed and places where education/training is currently provided;
- poor or sometimes non-existent facilities for the guidance and counselling of unemployed adults interested in pursuing education and training;
- poor or indeed (sometimes) forbidding facilities for reception at educational institutions;
- rigid course structures which permit enrolment at single or fixed times of the year, and inflexible and sometimes inconvenient times at which courses are run during the week;
- lack of facilities during the daytime;
- lack of facilities for women with young children.

OTHER RESEARCH

The project has recognised the important contribution made by other research undertaken locally into the educational and training needs of unemployed adults. By the spring of 1985, the Research and Intelligence Unit of Cleveland County Council had completed a county-wide survey of more than 1,600 unemployed adults, the report of which was published in October 1986 as a 'Survey of the Unemployed: Education and Training'. Some of the findings of this statistical profile are summarised below.

In total, 12% of the respondents in the survey had taken some kind of course, whether training, retraining, academic or leisure, since becoming involved. Although low, this figure is

approximately twice as high as national estimates of the proportion of the unemployed involved in formal educational activities at any time.

The majority of courses taken were practical or vocational in nature and were concentrated in traditional manual skills. Few respondents took courses in new technology such as electronics or computing.

Most participants took a course in the expectation that it would improve their job prospects, either by giving them a new skill or by updating or developing an existing skill. Others were motivated by interest in or enjoyment of a particular subject, but a fifth said that they took a course in order to counteract boredom or to do something positive with their time.

Three-quarters of respondents felt that they did not have all the skills they needed, but training was not necessarily the answer; over half felt they were no more likely to get a job after taking a training course. Attitudes towards leisure courses were more positive, with 82% saying that they would enjoy a course related to their interests or hobbies.

It was found that the over-45 age group, who were least likely to have been on a course or to show interest in future courses, had a much less positive attitude to all forms of education and training. In part, this was because they were less likely to feel that a training course would improve their job prospects.

Many of the reasons given by respondents as to why they had not taken courses in which they were interested were related to a lack of awareness of learning opportunities and their perceptions about conditions of entry onto courses.

Respondents reported problems in getting onto courses because they were full or had already started and repeat courses were not scheduled the following academic year.

PROBLEMS OF NEEDS ANALYSIS

To investigate the educational and training needs of unemployed adults with any degree of accuracy is a difficult undertaking. Even before the decision to embark on such an investigation is taken, problems of definition and terminology may confuse and obscure the eventual aim of making an appropriate educational response to adult unemployment. For example, how do we define 'need'? Does it consist simply in the recognition that unemployed people 'need' jobs, to which the appropriate response from colleges is an endless supply of vocational or skills training and retraining programmes? And if so, how are such offerings to be identified, and by whom? Are colleges and their management teams the right agencies to identify or assume the needs of economically disenfranchised adults, or should this role be the function of local industry, careers and other adult counselling agencies outside the college institution? Are the needs of unemployed people necessarily those associated with training for jobs, or is there a significant element of needs which is concerned with the personally liberating and creative potential offered by more broadly based learning opportunities? In areas like East Cleveland where employment opportunities, at present and in the foreseeable future, are unlikely even to approach the

demand for jobs, this second interpretation of need is gaining more currency with providers. Whichever of the two views is subscribed to by different agencies and providers, the manner in which they are translated into practice should not ignore the views and aspirations of the client group at which these initiatives are aimed. In any final analysis, the educational and training needs of unemployed adults must be those which the adult unemployed themselves identify. However inexpertly articulated, the perceptions, frustrations and ambitions which this group have about themselves, about employment and about further education opportunities warrant serious consideration in any attempt to identify and address needs.

A second problem surrounding needs analysis lies in the method and mechanisms employed in the collection of data and its subsequent collation and interpretation. When deciding on the relative merits of quantitative and qualitative research methods, a few cautionary points need to be recognised. Quantitative methodology, characterised by the questionnaire, seeks to quantify or measure the responses made by a representative sample of a wider population to a set of criteria which are pertinent to the objective. The criteria, or questions, to which responses are sought need to be carefully designed and structured in order to avoid ambiguity and vagueness. The survey is then piloted or tested out in order to expose any such weaknesses, and the relevant modifications are then made before full-scale implementation. No matter how carefully this process is executed, the researcher cannot guarantee that the answers given are genuinely those which are felt by the respondent and not those which the respondent feels are expected of him/her. Also, one might doubt the value of answers which are given as immediate reactions to certain questions — especially open-ended ones — since this type of interview situation does not easily allow the respondent time to think through a rational answer. Finally, quantitative methods do not readily illuminate the depth of feeling a respondent may have on central areas of concern to the researcher, nor can they always easily map the range of attitudes the sample may have on crucial issues. Qualitative methods, characterised by the in-depth interview and group discussion, can ameliorate some of these problems by providing the opportunity for the subject or group to reflect, deliberate and then discuss with the researcher the relevant issues and areas which lie at the heart of the investigation. The main problem with this method is that it is difficult to quantify the results because relatively small numbers of participants are involved. It is, however, possible to identify patterns and common themes in the results if sufficient numbers of such interviews or discussions are implemented.

Consideration of the adequacy or appropriateness of different research methods for different purposes should be the concern of staff in colleges who are organising work on needs analysis. In the initial stages of this action research project, reservations such as the ones outlined above were considered and it was decided to bring together the strengths of quantitative and qualitative methods by employing both in the initial stages of needs assessment and throughout the life of the project. Effective needs analysis was thus seen as a continuing process rather than a once-and-for-all event, forever to determine future action.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The initial and substantive phase in the process of needs analysis was decided upon; this strategy comprised two complementary approaches:

- a questionnaire survey in order to quantify:
  - — background details of a representative sample of largely unwaged adults;
  - — negative reinforcement of previous school experience;
  - — recent participation in college-based FE;
  - — preferred subject areas of learning opportunities;
  - — the extent to which outreach provision might attract unemployed adults to FE.
- group discussions with the following three categories of unwaged adults to supplement and give depth to the statistical data:
  - — women;
  - — younger unemployed adults, aged 18-25;
  - — older unemployed adults, aged 45 and above.

The method of implementation became a combination of face-to-face interviewing and postal self-completion. In the absence of an interviewing team, the project worker conducted most of the face-to-face interviews, with occasional voluntary help from two mature students who were enthusiastic about the idea of outreach provision. Another source of help during the survey implementation came from a REPLAN worker with Owton Fens Local Learning Centre, Hartlepool, who gave some support in interviewing as part of a short secondment to the Guisborough Centre for the Unemployed. However, time and other commitments prevented the entire survey being completed by interview. A self-completion version of the questionnaire was devised which was implemented in a variety of ways: the headteacher of a comprehensive school sent questionnaires to parents via school pupils; local Jobcentre staff asked clients to complete questionnaires; and the research worker arranged with staff of community centres and drop-in centres for the unemployed that unemployed users of these facilities be asked to participate. With the research worker conducting most of the interviewing and organising a variety of strategies for self-completion of the questionnaire, the survey was a time-consuming undertaking. However, in total 143 adults participated, 76 by direct interview and 67 by self-completion. The survey was carried out in a variety of local communities around East Cleveland. These included Easington, Loftus, Brotton, Skelton, Guisborough and the old mining villages of Boosbeck, Lingdale, Liverton and Charltons. The locations were chosen because of their geographic distance from the college (between 8 and 16 miles), and some were identified as possible locations for the delivery of outreach provision.

The questionnaire used in the survey is given in Appendix A.

Details of sample

No special attempt was made to recruit male and female respondents in order to reflect the gender distribution of unemployment, which in Cleveland stands at around 70% male and 30% female for registered unemployed. It was felt that an even balance would be more appropriate since many women who are not in receipt of unemployment benefit, and who therefore tend not to register, are nevertheless unwaged. Moreover, many share with the 'unemployed' such characteristics as personal isolation, low self-esteem and lack of a social identity; their attitudes, perceptions and experiences are thus as important as those of the 'unemployed' in trying to assess need. Of the sample, 51% were women and 49% were men.

68% of the sample were married and 24% single.

Participants were asked to indicate which age group they fitted into:

- 25% said they were between 18 and 24, with nearly twice as many males as females in this group;
- 62% were aged between 25 and 44, with about a third more women than men in this group;
- 13% were aged between 45 and 64;
- no respondents belonged to the 65+ age group.

Respondents were asked to indicate what was their normal type of work. The results were collated and interpreted into social class positions according to classification of occupations of the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys (OPCS). The Professional, Intermediate and Skilled Non-manual groups accounted for 25% of the sample, while Skilled Manual, Semi-skilled and Unskilled accounted for 50%. No responses were offered for the remaining 15%. These figures are in keeping with unemployment trends both locally on Teesside and nationally, where unemployment is most severe among the unskilled, and those possessing traditional manual craft skills which have become redundant through industrial restructuring and technological change.

Education and employment background of participants

Those respondents who were registered unemployed made up 51% of the sample (this figure includes 8 housewives who considered themselves as unemployed). The unwaged taken as a whole (including the 17 remaining housewives, 2 people in full-time education/training and 1 retired respondent) constituted 65% of the sample. Those in full-time work constituted 10%, while the remaining 24% were in part-time employment (this figure includes 12 respondents who were engaged on CP activities).

The vast majority (86%) had left school at the age of 15 or 16, though twice as many women as men had stayed on after 16 years of age. Moreover, among the 41% of respondents who had gained qualifications on leaving school, women scored twice as well as men, notably at levels above CSEs and up to degree level.

Perceptions of previous education and education since leaving school

One of the 'Barriers to Access' identifies negative attitudes to education by many adults, and this is associated with earlier compulsory schooling. However, in the survey, 68% considered school to be a good experience and had positive recollections of the standard of education, the atmosphere and the framework of discipline. Nevertheless, a significant minority (27%) considered school in opposite terms. The large proportion of positive responses given to the questions on previous school experience was surprising. It had previously been expected that the results would have been the other way around since evidence from college staff working with unemployed adults on infill and MSC special provision indicated a high level of adult dissatisfaction with their earlier exposure to education at school. This had been particularly marked with unemployed adults coming to the SCOPE course at the college. On this course students would receive a four-day induction into the college before progressing to a series of vocational training modules. This induction included individual and group counselling sessions, from which emerged in every intake a widespread antipathy towards their secondary schooling. In explaining their feelings, students would point to what they took as a lack of interest in them shown by their teachers, who would concentrate on the 'brightest pupils', and would observe that whilst at school they did not see the relevance of much of their learning activities. Interestingly, comments such as these were given by the 27% in our sample.

61% of respondents had taken some kind of education or training course since leaving schools. 19% had taken a course at Cleveland Technical College in the last three years; much of this provision was concentrated in traditional vocational courses, but it did include some new initiatives as well. Of those who had attended the college, 74% had completed their course; the 26% who did not indicated work, transport problems and general course dissatisfaction as reasons for incompletion.

Only 8% were currently engaged in some form of FE, and again such provision included recent course developments in new technology areas as well as traditional vocational education and training.

Attitudes to college-based FE, outreach provision and local learning centres

In order to gauge current attitudes to college-based FE and training, all participants were presented with a set of fifteen statements and were then asked whether they agreed or disagreed with them. The statements are a collection of the sort of comments that might be heard in and around local communities about why people do not take up education and training opportunities at the college, and as such they could be said to

represent negative statements on the structure and organisation of adult learning. Encouraging responses would, therefore, be in disagreement with the statements.

Nine of the statements were disagreed with by a majority of respondents, while five more statements found agreement in the majority of the sample.

Attitudes to education and college-based FE

On the six statements which were designed around attitudinal criteria, the responses were as follows:

- 79% did not agree that they had 'got all the education and skills [they] need'.
- 81% rejected the idea that they would not 'want to take a course at college because [they] never liked school'.
- 81% did not consider that their age put them 'past the stage of wanting to learn new things', although this figure is not surprising since only 13% of the sample were above 45 years of age.
- 66% would not worry about the 'classroom situation'.
- 64% would not 'feel nervous about going into a big educational building'.
- 57% would not 'feel out of place' in the college because of their age.

Problems of travel, time and information

If their personal or attitudinal and social perceptions of FE were on the whole positive and encouraging, the opposite seems to be the case when it comes to the participants' knowledge and understanding of what goes on in the college, of what the college does, of its fees policy and of the problems of getting to the provision:

- 62% of the survey participants did not 'really know what sort of courses they do at Redcar Technical College'.
- 56% (of largely unemployed adults) agreed with the statement 'I can't afford the fees'.
- 57% of respondents agreed that they 'always end up missing the boat' because 'courses only seem to start once a year'.
- 89% thought that the 'bus fares to Redcar and back make it too expensive, especially when you're unemployed'.
- 47% agreed that it was 'too far to travel into Redcar ... the travelling on top of the course takes up too much time'.

There was some difference in the overall pattern of responses between men and women to these two sets of statements, though this was not marked. More women than men would feel 'nervous' about going into a large college building. Women would also tend to 'feel out of place' because of the age difference between themselves and the majority of college students, who were younger. More women than men expressed concern about the overall time commitment which several miles' travelling from home to college and back would necessitate.

Outreach potential

Participants in the survey were asked if they would be more likely to take an educational course if it were offered locally, nearer home. 86% said they would be more likely. Of the 8% who would not be more likely to take an outreach course, some were not interested in FE at the time while others mentioned the lack of time because of family responsibilities. The remaining 6% made no response to the question.

Possible types of outreach learning venue

Local community facilities for outreach delivery have in the past been identified on the basis of what site would be convenient or appropriate from a college perspective, rather than on any consideration of how a site might appeal to adult students. In order to find out to what extent the character and atmosphere of different types of potential outreach learning venue might appeal to adults, respondents were asked to select their preferences to outreach sites from a list of very different facilities.

The distribution of first choices gave the school as the most favoured study site (37%), with the community centre coming second (29%). However, if first and second choices are combined, as an indication of overall positive commitment, the community centre enjoys a lead of 8 percentage points over the school with their scores at 40 and 32% respectively. Impasse-type centres received only moderate endorsement by respondents, ahead of flexi-study arrangements, while working men's clubs attracted disapprovingly low scores both in expressed preferences as well as to responses as a negative preference.

The school appears very popular with adults as an outreach learning venue, and yet schools often seem to represent structures and processes of learning which alienated people as school pupils and instilled negative attitudes towards FE and training as adults. However, this assumption is not given support here or elsewhere in the survey. Many of the respondents may have experienced adult education (AE) provision in schools as non-vocational night classes. Indeed, 61% had taken some kind of educational course since leaving school. Secondly, it was surprising that the working men's club was almost unreservedly rejected as a local learning centre by the sample. Of the respondents who indicated they would not do a course in one of the local learning centres listed, 87% identified the working men's club environment as one where they would not study. Nor was there any significant gender difference in the extent of disapproval of the working men's club as a local learning centre. Respondents were asked what it was about a working men's club which ruled it out as a place to do a course; even though it was pointed out that courses would not be put on alongside darts, dominoes, snooker and the serving of alcohol, respondents invariably pointed to a 'bad atmosphere', its being 'bad for concentration' and its being the 'wrong place for school work'.

Course preferences

The sample tended to indicate a fairly strong desire for skills-orientated and vocational education and training of a traditional type, but at the same time the survey also pointed to a demand

for provision in areas of new technology. The survey published by Cleveland County in October 1986 reported that unemployed adults, when asked about education and training, consistently indicated traditional and manual skills as those most preferred. This outreach survey points to a concomitant desire for provision concerned with computer skills, electronics and the development of skills for self-employment; and this may suggest a growing awareness of opportunities and employment prospects in fields of new technology. Thus, both men and women gave considerable emphasis to these areas from a list of 32 contending options.

71% of the sample wanted to be contacted if outreach courses started up in their area. These respondents were sent the relevant information as and when this happened.

The outreach survey was not designed with the intention that it should be exhaustive or prescriptive. Nor was it organised to enable a sophisticated level of cross-tabulation to be executed. Exclusive reliance on quantitative methods can only achieve partial success in identifying educational needs, for reasons indicated earlier in this chapter. The survey and its contribution to the project are seen as a component part in an overall needs-analysis programme, which also included the monitoring and evaluation of outreach provision and post-course monitoring of former outreach students. The survey, then, is a snapshot — albeit an important one — in an album containing other illuminating angles on a common theme.

GROUP DISCUSSION

A second strand of the research was the use of group discussion as a technique to explore in greater depth the educational and training needs of unemployed adults. It was felt that qualitative methods of this type could complement the data gained from the questionnaire survey by combining with it the perspectives of representative groups of the wider unemployed population. In this way the contribution from groups of unemployed people to the research is to provide a social and personal context by giving a human dimension to the statistical data. Furthermore, in order to assess as accurately as possible the needs of the unemployed, it was considered necessary to establish contact with different sections of the unemployed and organise with them group discussion sessions which would be recorded and transcribed for analysis. It was anticipated that common patterns would emerge between the groups with regard to their perceptions and attitudes towards education, arising from their common situation of being unemployed. However, it was also felt that the unemployed did not constitute simply an homogeneous group, towards whom the same sort of educational response was required from colleges. The project held the view from the outset that different categories or different groups of unemployed adults would be likely to perceive their own situation in different ways depending, for example, on whether they were male or female, younger or older, and so on. Moreover, the way in which perceptions are formed also influences the nature and extent of responses towards a variety of issues, including, in this case, education. It was necessary, therefore, for the project to find out how the groups might respond to educational initiatives, and also

how educational providers might wish to respond to those educational needs which were articulated by the unemployed themselves.

To these ends, the project undertook to make contact with three specific groups of unemployed adults:

- unwaged women;
- younger unemployed people;
- older unemployed people.

Unwaged women

The project worker had earlier made contact with and visited the East Cleveland Women's Self-help Group (ECWSHG) as part of the process of establishing links with local community-based groups in the Borough of Langbaurgh. On a subsequent visit, the meeting was given over to a group discussion session on how unwaged women might view FE and college-based provision, and how outreach initiatives might make for more relevant forms of delivery. As members of a local women's group, the participants were well qualified to point out the situation that many women find themselves in and to express sentiments that they felt were shared by their wider peer group. Many of the feelings expressed by the participants centred on what they perceived as an insensitivity from colleges towards the educational aspirations many women have, on unhelpful advice when making attempts to return to learning and on a generalised perception of some forms of AE as not being for them.

In the group of ten women who participated in the discussion, three had had experience of attempting to gain access to college provision or had taken college courses. None of these attempts had proved satisfactory. However, one woman who had gone to college to make enquiries about courses explained her experience:

> 'I went to college to ask for advice. I knew that there was no official course for what I was interested in [some sort of Enterprise Training] but I thought that they could point me in the right direction. When the lecturer discovered that I had been a computer programmer for eight years he tried to persuade me to take a basic computer course. He just wasn't listening to what I was telling him. He thought that I would do the one he wanted me to do whether it was irrelevant or whether I knew it all or I didn't. I had actually got some skills which he was refusing to acknowledge. He wasn't interested in what I wanted to do.'

Another participant, who had decided on FE after her children were grown up, said she had faced questions at a different college like 'Why does a woman of your age want education?' and 'What does your poor husband think of it?' A third participant who had enrolled on a college course had felt somewhat intimidated '... going into a great big building where you've never been before and going through all these long corridors. It's very strange and then you have to walk in a classroom and say, "Is this the right classroom?"' And once inside, the situation had not been made any easier.

'I took a City and Guilds Woodwork course, where I was considered to be an oddball. When I asked this particular lecturer for extra work because I hadn't done any technical drawing he just refused to sort of help with anything. That was two years ago. I ended up going to the local school and getting some extra work in an Adult Education Class doing technical drawing so that I could come up to the same standard of those in the class at college. Even though I got top marks in the assessment over all the males in the class, it made no difference. On the first night the lecturer led me to the tool cupboard, produced some tools, and asked questions like "Have you ever seen one of these before?" and "I'll bet you don't know how to use this." It was as if I had come to do some really basic stuff. Their attitude towards me was to "stand her in the corner and give her a bit of wood to rub down".'

Within the group there was a general feeling that post-school education was not meant for women; that women who penetrated the further educational system somehow did so despite the opportunities available rather than because of them. The group tended to relate these feelings to how women perceived themselves in education:

'I think it's because women don't think of themselves as being intelligent ... Academic work has always had the image of being too difficult for women because of their experience at school.'

'Yes, at school we were made to feel like idiots if we didn't know the right answers — no one ever asked if you were having difficulty. I hated school so much that when I left, the first thing I did was go home and burn all my books. I passed all but one of my exams, but I hated it.'

However, this participant was equally quick to point out that she could never see the relevance of much of what she did at school, but now, years later, saw the point:

'You've got to have a reason to learn. Half of what I learned at school is totally useless to me. I was a YTS supervisor for two years and during that time came across a 16-year-old boy who was considered useless, not worth bothering about until one joinery supervisor sat down and chatted with him, only to discover that the boy felt very passionately about animals. The supervisor suggested that the boy might enjoy making a dog kennel or a bird table or something. So then the supervisor told him that he would have to learn how to work out the circumference of a circle. The boy was enthusiastic and knew that he would have to learn the basics of woodwork in order to be able to make these things — he became quite a good joiner after that.'

This women's self-help group was enthusiastic about outreach local learning possibilities. They pointed particularly to its attraction for women, whose normal daily routine was in effect a timetable of family responsibilities centred around preparing meals and escorting children to and from school. Since this was the case, outreach provision would have to be organised around such commitments, otherwise learning opportunities on their

doorstep would be just as inaccessible as they currently were at the college. They were equally adamant, however, that outreach initiatives would not in the long term succeed unless some of the negative aspects of college-based provision and its organisation, as they had outlined, were addressed and rectified. To this group, it seemed pointless taking education out into the community in order to overcome barriers to learning, if, in the process, other equally inhibiting structures and attitudes were to accompany outreach provision.

Younger unemployed

The second of the group discussions was implemented with a group of younger unemployed adults between the ages of 18 and 25. It took place in an Impasse centre, a drop-in facility for the unemployed at a village seven miles from the college. The research worker had earlier made several visits to the centre, talking to its management committee, the workers who maintained and supervised activities, and the centre-users. The group discussion session involved eight unemployed people and two CP workers who were employed on a part-time basis. As with the first group, the discussion focused on unemployment and FE, but emphasised also the perspective of younger unemployed adults.

The feelings of this group reflected some of the concerns expressed by the women's group, but the younger unemployed also went on to point to what they felt were inappropriate or only marginally relevant areas of FE provision. The group further described what they considered were the needs of the younger unemployed cohort and added how such needs ought to be addressed.

All the participants thought few people from their village would consider going to college for courses:

> 'People are not keen on travel. Redcar Tech is for people who live in Redcar.'

> 'People are put off by the size of colleges. Anyway tech is just an extension of school.'

The group also felt that unemployed people like themselves had little to gain from college courses aimed at training for jobs. When asked by the research worker why they held this view when colleges provided a variety of vocationally relevant training opportunities, one commented:

> 'This is what we hear all the time, but the simple fact is that there are no jobs about.'

Another participant said:

> 'What's the point of an unemployed plumber retraining to be an electrician when an unemployed, fully qualified, experienced electrician lives next door. If his neighbour can't get a job, what chance does he stand even after retraining?'

More than half of the group had never experienced full-time employment, though most had been on the Youth Training Scheme (YTS) or other schemes since leaving school. There was

a widespread feeling of being let down, that their expectations and assumptions of moving into permanent work from school had not materialised and that this had left them disappointed — some bitterly so. Nor was FE seen as an immediately realistic alternative to unemployment, even though it was agreed that FE in itself was a good thing:

> 'To do that for a start you're going to have to admit politically that nationally there is never going to be full employment again. At school today people are trained to go out into the world with a job — there are no jobs; it's the biggest social con at the moment. Kids of 16–17 are coming out of school expecting to find jobs that just are not there.'

> 'Yes, education is a good thing, but when you meet people in the street and they ask how are you and are you working, if you say no then you are just a non-person. You are what you do. The fact that you are retraining or taking a further education course does not seem to be an explanation. Unemployment is still socially unacceptable.'

Whilst agreeing that FE was a good thing in itself, this group felt that its general vocational direction was inappropriate to the needs of unemployed people. The group consistently repeated the point that employment prospects for their generation were so bad as to make vocational training and academic education largely irrelevant. If FE institutions and the services they provided were ever to reflect the real needs of unemployed people in their local communities, then, according to this group, colleges would have to recognise and respond to how people themselves perceived their situation, rather than providing what an FE establishment might consider to be an appropriate response to the problem. It seems that training and retraining for available or potential jobs comes a poor second to provision which aims to help the unemployed help themselves in their homes and in their local communities. When asked how a college could most effectively organise its expertise to provide courses for the unemployed, the whole group pointed to courses which were practical. As one participant put it:

> 'DIY — unemployed people want to know how to mend the washing machine or renew cupboards and save £30 call-out money for the "experts". What is a two-hour robotics course going to do for anyone? What good will retraining do when DIY is what people want and is much more relevant for the unemployed than retraining?'

Another said:

> 'DIY courses. This area has a high number of decaying properties — unemployed people can't afford to bring builders and the likes in. If they could do their own repairs it would not only save money but give them a sense of achievement. It would make people more self-sufficient.'

Certainly evidence from other sources tends to support these sentiments. Students on college courses often ask for practical courses which will give them basic repair and renovation skills. Talks with college staff and community-based groups outside the colleges have made the same point. Indeed, it is widely felt that

unemployed adults enrolled on vocational courses such as City and Guilds and Business and Technician Education Council (BTEC) courses, are there to develop practical skills as much as for any related employment objective.

This group, then, held a deeply pessimistic view of their situation and expressed little optimism for employment in the future for themselves and their generation. In this context, they viewed vocational training as not being relevant, but at the same time they were more enthusiastic about forms of education which offered opportunities for personal skills development not linked to the obtaining of qualifications for jobs.

Older unemployed

The idea of gathering together a group of unemployed people over the age of 40 for the purpose of group discussion on FE was much easier than its eventual realisation. The project decided not to constitute such a group from students already in college since these people tended to represent a relatively well-motivated sample, whose contribution might, therefore, not reflect the views of the wider unemployed population over the age of 40. Instead, the research worker went to the main local Jobcentre in Redcar, and with the support of its manager gave a briefing to all the front-desk personnel about the reasons for and purpose of bringing together a group of older unemployed adults. The desk staff, who were the main contact points for Jobcentre users, would ask suitable clients if they would be willing to participate in a group discussion. Emphasis was placed on the fact that neither the Jobcentre nor the college would try to sell a course to them, that confidentiality was guaranteed and that no travel costs would be incurred. After three months, only four people had been persuaded to take part, two of whom had subsequently changed their minds when the research worker contacted them. In the meantime, the search was extended to include various job clubs, Restart initiatives, private trainers, voluntary groups and facilities for unemployed people. This wider trawl did produce 12 willing subjects, but only after an exhaustive and time-consuming process. The reasons why people were unwilling to take part were so many variations on two typical comments:

> 'No, I'm depressed enough.'
>
> 'I'm sick of talking to people, sick of interviews and filling in forms; it'll be the same crap, people talking to you.'

Eventually, after four months of co-operative efforts by different organisations, the research worker brought the participants, men and women over 45, together at a neighbourhood centre in South Bank, where unemployment averages 39%.

The difficulty which was experienced in forming this group is indicative of the extremely low numbers of older unemployed adults in FE. It was also a foretaste of what was to emerge in the discussion. The first part of the session centred on why there were so few older people in FE. Some comments reflected those in the previous group discussions about bad experiences that people had had at school. Other participants pointed to the age gap between themselves and other college students, sensitivity about being unemployed and apprehension about formal courses:

'I'd be very embarrassed. It's the age group. If you were to go into a class of 20 and most of them were 17/18-year-olds you would be out of place. If you could get a group of 15 — 20 people all aged over 40 you'd have a better atmosphere.'

'I think one of the reasons could be that you get this feeling of being sneered at for being unemployed for a long time ... maybe they think you would be depriving a youngster of education.'

'You see all these courses involve homework and examinations at the end. I wouldn't want to do any examinations or homework.'

'If you've been away from it a long time, if you left school 20 or 30 years ago, it'll take maybe a year or so to get back into the swing of it, whereas a youngster might only take a month or two.'

These comments provide a number of different rationalisations as to why FE tends to be poorly attended by this age group.

The one point that all the participants were agreed upon was that FE as characterised by academic and vocational provision had little relevance if it was offered as a route back into employment, though not necessarily because job vacancies were minimal:

'Well, for a start, and we've said it once before, once you reach 40 and you apply for jobs, you get knocked back every time. People see these courses and wonder if the course would improve their prospects of getting a job and then they decide, "No it isn't, they're going to go for the young ones".'

'I've got one letter at home, I forget the exact wording but it says, "I wouldn't waste your paper and postage, just forget about it because you're over 40". Other letters have just been a polite refusal but that one just told me I was wasting my time.'

'Going from what George just said, if you're over 40 and go for a job now you've got to have 'A' levels and at least three 'O' levels. You have to go to college for three or four years to get these qualifications and by that time you're over 50. Even for a dustman's job you've got to have 'O' levels, you see it advertised. So even these jobs are for the young lads.'

Unlike the younger group, the older unemployed had not totally given up the search for work and they were well aware that job opportunities did exist, and, as evidenced by the scale of their applications, they knew where jobs were available. However, they did share with the younger group a belief that training for jobs held little relevance, but for reasons connected with age. The group had, as individuals, enjoyed many years of full-time permanent work and, although depressed and partially traumatised by the experience of unemployment, their assumptions about future vacancies were optimistic and quite naturally based on the past — a past which was defined by work and the structure and routine to life which employment provided. The main problem as they saw it was not the inevitability of life on the dole due to non-existent job

opportunities but the fear of permanent idleness because employers chose to hire younger workers, who, as one participant put it, 'could give them [employers] a few miles'.

The need for structure and routine to their daily lives was evident throughout the discussion, and it was in this context that further education opportunities offered relevance and meaning:

> 'When I was out of work for some time, I was running out of things to do; I'd finished the decorating and dug the garden. I was looking at all the colleges to see what courses they had to offer mainly for the fact of purely filling my time in. I wouldn't have been looking for anything to help me get a new job.'

> 'Yes, cause there's no doubt about it — if you just sit at home, your brain goes dumb. It takes a long time to get it back into action if you do get another job. You don't want to be sat about all day doing nothing, you want something to occupy your brain to keep it active.'

> 'You've got to try to keep to a routine and to be able to get there for nine o'clock; it gets you up at seven, otherwise you'd stay in bed till after nine.'

The relevance of FE was seen by the group to rest on its ability to provide courses which could develop or extend hobbies, interests and leisure pursuits. They identified these types of learning activities not in terms of alternatives to unemployment nor as indirect pathways back into employment, but as structured patterns of behaviour which would ameliorate the vacuous existence that long-term unemployment produces.

They also saw in outreach a means by which these activities could become part of their local community rather than a part of yet another scheme to help the unemployed:

> 'Get the teachers to come out of the college into places like the Neighbourhood Centre and get groups of people together and teach them outside the college, not in the college.'

> 'I think it would be a good idea for you people to come out to the settlement and woodwork shop and if we need to know how to do a dovetail joint then help us and the next week do something else. It would be great to have someone come out just once a week. Even experienced men would appreciate it.'

This group, then, confirmed some of the barriers to FE during the discussion, but also went on to articulate from their perspective why vocational training provision seemed inappropriate to their educational needs. Their needs were expressed in terms of practical or craft courses and activities which would promote hobbies and interests. Courses such as these would permit a more immediate need to be addressed, that of re-establishing a structure to fractured lives — and outreach delivery in local community settings could provide the most appropriate vehicle to help meet this central need.

SUMMARY

The results of the survey and the perspectives of different sections of the adult unemployed population which emerged from the series of group discussions can offer educational providers a clear insight into the FE needs of unemployed adults. Some of the findings indicate that, whilst unemployed adults share the same characteristics of being without work, different groups within the unemployed expressed different needs. An appreciation of the diversity of experiences, perceptions and wants which exist within the unemployed population can only be of great help to providers of outreach opportunities in matching needs with provision. There would seem to be little point in making considerable efforts to overcome barriers to FE by taking education and training out into the community if what was offered on outreach was not recognised as relevant by those whom the provision was aimed at. Moreover, some of the findings of this investigation have implications for main site provision as well as for outreach.

CONCLUSIONS

There exists a considerable gap between the available FE opportunities and their communication to, and the understanding of them by, the wider public. Moreover, there is a clear need for an effective system of AE information and counselling within FE and this is as relevant for main-site opportunities as it is for outreach activities.

The survey offers evidence of a demand for provision in the areas of new technology — especially computer skills and electronics. This may reflect a growing awareness of employment possibilities in these fields. However, the survey did not ask respondents why they expressed preferences for the subject areas which were indicated. Indeed, it may well be that many respondents were primarily interested in home computing, DIY electronics packages, or in assisting their children's education. Material from the group discussions gives an indication that apparently vocational provision might be redesigned to cater for non-vocational needs.

More than half the sample in the survey 'missed the boat', with most courses starting once a year at the same time. This supports the view that the demand for FE is more than an annual event, and unemployment does not refrain from striking at people until just before enrolment. There is a need, therefore, for more flexible learning opportunities which outreach could provide. Colleges do change their large and complex organisational and administrative structures to reflect changing patterns of demand, but they do so only slowly. Outreach provision, being physically apart from the college as well as constituting a relatively small volume of college work, is better placed to respond quickly to need as and when it is identified.

In every statement or question in the survey which sought personal and attitudinal responses towards education and training, only a minority of the sample gave negative replies. However, when the survey was collated it became clear that the figures do not represent the collective responses of more or less

the same group of people, but are much more evenly distributed throughout the sample. Factors such as these are therefore much more significant than the figures might suggest: they are very real barriers to education. Outreach work can offset these constraints by its local, informal organisation.

The geographic problems associated with barriers to access to FE are pointed up in the survey results, notably with travelling costs and the overall time commitment involved in going to college. Furthermore, the respondents in the survey overwhelmingly endorsed the notion of FE outreach provision by indicating they would be more likely to take a course if it were offered locally.

The outreach learning venues identified in the survey are local facilities which have few formal or even informal links with the college. Yet these local community facilities are crucial to the success of outreach initiatives, not only in the sense that they host the provision but also in contributing some of their resources to the overall organisation of outreach courses. The absence of effective communication and ongoing dialogue between the college and identified outreach centres could adversely affect outreach delivery.

A significant proportion of the survey sample did not think that a training course would improve their chances of employment. This was supported by similar findings in the Research and Intelligence Survey. Moreover, in the group discussion work, both the younger and older unemployed did not consider vocational courses as relevant to their needs if such provision was geared towards finding work. If these findings are representative of the wider unemployed adult population, then there would appear to be a mismatch between the needs of unemployed adults as identified in this chapter and the perception of the needs of this client group by many colleges.

The previous chapter combined quantitative and qualitative data in order to develop a comprehensive framework of the educational needs of unwaged adults. The conclusions indicate that a considerable demand exists for further educational provision in general, and outreach delivery in particular. On the basis of this evidence, it is possible to formulate and arrive at a set of aims or operating principles which should underpin the design and delivery of outreach provision. These are:

General aims

- to take education and training opportunities to the community rather than have the community come to AE and training;
- to increase the level of participation in FE by unwaged adults, particularly by those who are traditional non-participants.

Specific aims

- to provide high-quality self-standing units of education and training opportunities;
- to design such provision so that it is recognised as relevant and appropriate to the needs of unwaged adults;
- to deliver such provision in community-based facilities, or local learning centres, in an environment which is non-institutional, informal, familiar and therefore non-threatening;
- to enable outreach students to gain the confidence to progress to further learning opportunities, and particularly to main-site provision;
- to establish outreach delivery as a permanent feature of further educational provision as an alternative to main-site activities for those adults who, because of a variety of 'barriers' to access, would be unable to make the transition to college-based learning opportunities.

During the process of investigating educational needs, it became apparent that successful outreach delivery would not simply be a matter of overcoming the various geographical, personal and domestic 'barriers'. It would be necessary to ensure that students' learning and their activities in college were not predetermined and structured without the possibility of student input. Several participants in the group discussion sessions either viewed FE as an extension of school where the teacher assumed a dominant and distant approach, or, in their experience of FE had identified an inflexible and therefore only partially relevant form of education. The design of outreach provision, if it is to reach traditional non-participants and those who at best reside on the margins of FE, should recognise concerns such as these and provide for, and encourage, the participation of students in establishing the objectives of their courses. All should be involved in devising a strategy within a learning environment which respects the experiences and perspectives of the student group. Neither does it seem sufficient for outreach initiatives to be student-centred simply within the classroom situation. Many unemployed adults do remain active in the search for work even after long periods of

unemployment and therefore feel unable to commit themselves to a long-term course of one year's duration. Outreach provision could therefore be considered in terms of relatively short courses, whilst outreach units could be designed in such a way as to enable clients to repeat, extend or continue their educational development as and when their personal circumstances changed. Finally, outreach has the aim of encouraging its students, where possible, to progress to main-site provision where more extensive use can be made of specialist equipment which is not easily transportable and where students are able to experience a much greater range of learning opportunities. This means that the identification and design of outreach learning units, while ensuring that they remain relevant as self-standing modules, should incorporate the option for progression. These four considerations are listed below and are then explained in greater detail.

Curriculum design features of outreach provision:

- The need to establish a relationship of equality between tutor and students by using an informal, friendly and empathetic style of teaching.
- Curriculum content should be subject to negotiation between students and tutor where practicable.
- Curriculum should be structured on a modular basis, with self-standing short courses which enjoy a design-fit to other modular units of learning.
- Curriculum design should incorporate the option for progression.

EQUALITY

One of the aims of the Outreach project was to increase the level of participation in FE by unwaged adults, particularly by those adults who can be described as traditional non-participants — adults who typically do not recognise the relevance of FE to their lives or to their employment situation. Evidence in the previous chapter suggests that in part this is because their previous school experience was negative, or their exposure to education as adults within the classroom situation has been less than satisfactory. One of the older unemployed adults, commenting on his one exposure to FE, said:

> 'One thing adults want is respect for their age and experience. One thing I found when I went to college is that they treated me like a little boy, and I'd been in charge of 14 or 15 men.'

Remarks like this are not uncommon. Too often, FE fails to recognise and appreciate the value of the previous experience of students, their maturity, and the contribution this can make to the learning situation.

Such recognition would imply a high level of respect for the students as equals, but this often seems to be prevented by the maintenance of a formal structure of status relations within the classroom. The tutor assumes the monopoly on knowledge and wisdom, and therefore the power of agenda-setting. This is constricting for students and inhibits effective adult learning.

Another possible problem area lies in the insensitivity of some practitioners towards different types of students with different problems, fears and frustrations. Long-term unemployment has a general demoralising effect on the individual which extends into any attempt at education or training — 'the older unemployed often feel out of place when returning to education' — and many women feel threatened by an FE service which they feel has been constructed by men for men. An awareness of and sensitivity towards feelings such as these by practitioners can allow a relationship of equality to develop between tutor and students:

> 'The way that the person teaching the course comes across and can relate to and understand people that have been away from education for 20 to 30 years is important. If that can happen you're not treated like the young ones.' (Older unemployed person.)

If outreach courses are to attract and retain those at whom such initiatives are aimed, stereotypical perceptions of traditional tutor-student relationships need to be militated against. This can only happen by:

- respecting adult students as adults;
- demonstrating sensitivity towards the characteristics of different student groups.

Equality in the context of outreach is seen as a relationship of mutual respect between tutor and students which encourages the latter to develop confidence and motivation in order to pursue effective learning:

> 'This lecturer-student attitude will have to go.'
> (Participant in younger unemployed group.)

NEGOTIATION

The group discussion work with both younger and older unemployed adults revealed a deep-seated scepticism about vocational courses, particularly those which were directly related to employment potential. And yet traditional courses of this type have constituted the backbone of college-based FE provision. These two groups of unemployed adults were not antagonistic to the idea of skills development; indeed, this is what many of the participants actually wanted in order to competently carry out renovation and repair work, extend or develop a new interest, or contribute in some small way to voluntary and community activities. The contention here is that many unemployed adults when entering or re-entering FE do not want theory-laden courses, or courses which incorporate significant sections of what may be considered inconsequential learning activities, far removed from the sort of practical activities that are perceived by students who enrol on courses which are advertised as electronics, electrics, computing, etc:

> 'The image of school has got to change. More practical work should be offered and less theory. People should not have to slog through all the paperwork and be in classroom situations.' (Younger unemployed person.)

Further evidence of this comes from the college itself through its experience of providing training on the MSC-funded SCOPE

courses. Here students would take a series of skill-based blocks of practical learning activities which aimed to provide an introduction to various disciplines. The content and direction of these modules were subject to negotiation between tutor and students after the tutor had gone through the various possibilities. SCOPE students were either unemployed or on CP schemes. Their general level of motivation was lower initially than that of other students, but because they were able to have an impact on the focus and content of their learning, their drop-out rate was lower than the average. Moreover, as students developed confidence in their abilities, and a wider interest in the subject, many would infill into vocational courses geared towards certification. The point, therefore, is not to criticise traditional vocational provision, but to question why courses which might not appear to be of immediate relevance to unwaged adults are afforded primacy while at the same time little flexibility is offered to enable such students to express their needs and have them met. Outreach provision which seeks to respond to community-based learning needs of unwaged adults should develop its course aims and course content in conjunction with its client group.

> 'The first two or three sessions should be geared at finding out what people want from the course and individuals should be able to discuss with the lecturer exactly what they want to achieve.'

> 'It should be a partnership. Joint decisions should be made by student and teacher, a no "them and us" situation.' (Younger unemployed person.)

The opportunity for students to directly influence the direction and content of their course through discussion and negotiation with the tutor not only allows specific needs to be identified and addressed, but it also provides unemployed adults with a rare sense of ownership and control over part of their lives, in the context of their local community.

MODULARISATION

In the context of outreach provision, modularisation means that units of learning be structured as relatively short courses of not more than one academic term, and possibly less, depending on the type of course offered and the requirements of the students. Outreach modules can be self-standing in that they might provide a basic introduction to a particular subject or discipline while at the same time being designed as components to a wider range of possibilities linked specifically or generically. For example, an outreach course on local history would no doubt focus on the development of the local economy, its industry, commerce and political organisations. An appreciation of how these areas interacted locally has implications for understanding how similar forces at a national level produced an industrial society. In other words, skills being developed on one module can be transferred, extended and deepened on another. Similarly, a conventional course can be broken down into modules, with each acting as a building block to the next. Modularisation has the attraction of providing the unemployed with the opportunity

to commit themselves initially to only a short-term involvement, while maintaining the option to advance and deepen skills in the particular subject chosen.

PROGRESSION

An important aim of outreach is to enable students to gain the confidence to progress to further learning opportunities, and particularly to main-site provision. Participation in outreach education is likely to stimulate greater levels of motivation in students, which could enable many to overcome whatever barriers had initially prevented them from taking advantage of college-based learning opportunities. Personal circumstances may also have changed to a point where college provision becomes more accessible. In this context, progression is seen as the final strand in a student-centred approach to outreach education for unemployed adults. Progression is closely related to modularisation. The identification of outreach modules in part has to be based on the ability of the college to receive outreach students onto relevant courses. Outreach students who have gained confidence in their abilities, deepened their interest in a subject and therefore developed the motivation to travel to college, need to be received onto courses which offer a logical continuity of learning in their chosen subject. This implies to a greater or lesser extent the modularisation of main-site provision if outreach students are not to suffer inappropriate and potentially damaging infill arrangements when making the transition to college. This is not to make the claim that outreach should be viewed as a catalyst for structural change within college-based provision, but it does point up the wider relevance of recent initiatives in the modularisation of college courses — for example, in Access provision and the City and Guilds 726 Information Technology course. The notion of progression need not focus exclusively on the institution responsible for outreach initiatives. Thus:

- progression can mean moving to different or related outreach modules as and when the need arises and when students are unable to overcome barriers to main-site learning;
- progression can mean referral to educational institutions other than the one which initially provided the outreach course;
- progression can mean referral to other learning activities based locally, be they traditional non-vocational AE classes, the Workers' Education Association (WEA) or a variety of activities organised by local voluntary groups.

A student-centred commitment to outreach will inevitably involve passing on clients to other organisations and agencies since it is unlikely that the initiating institution will in every instance be able to satisfy the diversity of ambitions which will emerge as adult returners begin to realise their educational potential.

Two concluding points can, therefore, be made concerning progression:

- colleges embarking on outreach initiatives will need to give equal and serious consideration to the modular restructuring of

some main-site provision if the needs and aspirations of students making the transition to colleges are not to be undermined;

- colleges embarking on outreach initiatives should seek to establish closer co-operative and collaborative links with a variety of agencies involved in adult learning activities if the diverse educational needs of unemployed adults are to be effectively addressed.

LOCAL LEARNING CENTRES

Chapter 2 identified the attraction to adults of different types of potential local learning centres on the basis that they represent facilities which are organised for and used by the local community in a variety of ways and for a variety of purposes. Local learning centres for the provision of adult FE ought not to be seen as 'outposts' or annexes for any particular FE institution, but rather as community-based facilities within which FE provision takes place along with and alongside a variety of group activities — and similarly controlled by local people. From this it follows that local learning centres should be facilities which are already in use for other purposes and which are places where the unemployed/unwaged already go (community centres, unemployed workers' centres, sports clubs, schools, etc.), so that people who go to a place for one reason might stay for another. Where different groups and a multiplicity of activities can exist side by side, frontiers into education can be crossed more easily, and crossed back again as and when people identify, and are able to articulate, any particular educational need. In this context, the contribution of a locally accessible education guidance and counselling service should not be ignored.

Thus, a definition of a local learning centre might be offered as a local community-based facility within which FE contributes on equal terms with other agencies to the vocational, basic and general educational needs of adults, as perceived by themselves and articulated through local community organisations working with educational guidance and counselling services.

FUNCTIONS OF A LOCAL LEARNING CENTRE

Local learning centres will differ in size, facilities, use, etc., and consequently the breadth and content of the potential curriculum will vary. All centres, however, should address certain operational aims or functions:

- to welcome people on their own terms and in an environment which is non-institutional, informal, comfortable and therefore non-threatening;
- to help adults identify their educational needs and to enable them to plan/organise suitable programmes to meet those needs; an educational guidance and counselling service would ensure more accurate identification of need as well as the relevant programme of learning activity;
- to provide vocational, basic and general educational opportunities on a rolling programme basis throughout the year rather than the more limited academic year; centres

should also, in general, aim for 'flexible' programme provision, responding to changing curriculum demand as well as repeated demand;

- to encourage the development of a core community group where representatives of groups — using the local learning centre — can articulate new and continuing adult educational needs; and to connect more widely with the variety of clubs, societies and voluntary groups that make up an active local community;
- to act as a local base for, and to operate within, a co-operative 'network' linking the community level to that of district, enabling wider dissemination of existing educational opportunities and more effective 'mapping' of popular need — the aim is to create a comprehensive network of provision with different points of access;
- to connect with appropriate workplace learning schemes and those offered through projects funded by the Training Agency;
- to ensure representation of colleges within each local learning centre; this obviously includes the delivery of outreach modules, but it also suggests the need for institutional representation in order:
  - — to continue to assist unwaged adults, as individuals or as members of organised groups, to articulate education need;
  - — to provide an educational information and guidance service related to college provision;
  - — to liaise with the different local groups that provide services to the unemployed.

SUMMARY

The focus of this chapter has been to set out and explain some important aims of outreach in the context of an overall student-centred response from outreach initiatives. Such a response, it has been argued, should primarily be concerned to ensure that curriculum design reflects the perspectives and needs of unwaged adults in their local communities. Chapter 2 explored the perspective of unwaged people and this has been recognised in the identification of certain key curriculum design features of outreach provision. Thus, **equality, negotiation, modularisation** and **progression** have been described and discussed in this chapter, with emphasis on the student. A client-centred approach has therefore been developed for the structure, content and delivery of outreach educational programmes to unwaged adults. The next chapter goes further and assesses these aspects of outreach curriculum design through the experience of a number of modules piloted through the project.

4. DELIVERY AND EVALUATION

INTRODUCTION

Four outreach modules were piloted in stages throughout the life of the project and have been comprehensively evaluated for the purpose of this chapter. A fifth module was developed and implemented towards the end of the project and this will be discussed in the final chapter in the context of a community-led module of outreach provision. The four modules evaluated here, therefore, constitute the most substantive phase of outreach delivery associated with the project. They form a small representation of the diversity of FE provision and reflect variously the different logistical and curricular constraints on taking main-site provision out into the community. In geographical terms, the courses were mounted from 5 miles west of the college to 12 miles to its east, and as far as 8 miles to the south. The venues which hosted the courses varied in type of facility and atmosphere: a community centre; an activity-based drop-in centre for unemployed adults; a sports and leisure club for the younger unemployed; and a school. Each course was designed to meet the diverse educational needs of unwaged adults as perceived by the college through its experience of working with the unwaged, especially in areas of more recent curriculum development. The four modules were therefore identified largely on the basis of an initial provider-led interpretation of need. This provider-led strategy, the project felt, was necessary because the implementation of the four modules did not follow on from the needs-analysis stage, which was a lengthy process, but took place shortly before the survey and group discussion data had been fully analysed. However, in the evaluation of delivery it was possible to utilise both the results of the needs analysis and the curriculum design criteria when they were formulated soon after the modules started. Underpinning the four modules was a belief in self-standing high-quality outreach education and outreach as an access mechanism or route into FE.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

Various evaluative research instruments were used at different points in the process (see Appendix B):

- an initial start-of-course student questionnaire and subsequent follow-up of student withdrawals during the course;
- interviews with course tutors;
- an end-of-course survey of students who had completed their course;
- in-depth interviews with students at the end of their course;
- a follow-up or destination survey of students which combined reflective criteria, conducted two months after the conclusion of each course by telephone or face-to-face interview.

ORGANISATION, STRUCTURE AND DESIGN ELEMENTS OF THE COURSES

Duration

The courses were structured around the autumn academic term of 12 weeks. This decision was not made for the administrative

convenience of college organisation but was considered to be more client centred. A much shorter duration would have provided the students with little more than a 'taster' course (which was not the intention). A longer course would have ignored the imperative of finding work and have made more difficult the physical and psychological commitment to education by unemployed adults. Twelve weeks was seen as efficacious in enabling skills development to take place without further undermining short-term job prospects.

Mode of delivery

Each of the three courses was organised on a part-time day basis in the afternoon. Daytime provision is clearly accessible for the unemployed, but especially so for women who have child-care and other domestic responsibilities which demand their attention in the evenings. Also the afternoon session was favoured because restructured patterns of daily living by the unemployed often involve late rising, or signing on and job-seeking in the mornings.

Time

Initially each course was scheduled for 1.30-3.30 pm with approximately 30 minutes on each side for tutor travelling time. The actual times changed between courses to accommodate various student responsibilities, usually domestic.

Design

The recognition of unemployed/unwaged adults as a specific group with particular needs — yet without losing sight of their diversity — requires a new client-centred approach to the design and delivery of educational programmes. The four outreach courses attempted as far as possible to incorporate the key design features of equality, negotiation, modularisation and progression into this approach.

Target groups

These were disadvantaged adults of both sexes and all age groups, including:

- unemployed/unwaged;
- CP workers;
- lone parents;
- disabled.

MARKETING

Marketing in this context is about knowing and being known by immediate and future potential students. Contacts and communication with potential students will accelerate the spread and acceptance of the aims of FE outreach and also help the college to effectively identify, anticipate and satisfy educational needs within any local community.

Publicity in this context is seen as specific and narrow information dissemination to be received by a diffuse and amorphous audience of potential students; it has the simple aim of selling a product.

A publicity strategy was developed to include the following mechanisms:

- various press articles and advertisements according to the different geographical distribution patterns of local publications;
- leaflets distributed by hand to people in the street or left in places where unemployed people go;
- posters where unemployed people go;
- talks to local groups and localised organisations from both voluntary and statutory sectors;
- a mailing list of around 120 organisations and key individuals involved in work with adults;
- local radio — two stations;
- internal mailing of college staff;
- mailing of parents via pupils of a local school in an outreach targeted area.

IDENTIFICATION OF VENUES FOR OUTREACH DELIVERY

During the long process of making contact and establishing an ongoing dialogue with local community groups, the research worker was also engaged in touring many of the villages around East Cleveland looking at potential venues for the delivery of outreach provision. Six areas were identified as suitable, being either large villages or small towns situated at least 5 miles away from the college in Redcar, and having significantly large numbers of unemployed adults. In each of the six areas, around four or five potential outreach venues were visited and investigated. Types of facility included:

- community centres;
- church halls;
- village halls;
- schools;
- libraries;
- neighbourhood advice centres;
- drop-in centres of various kinds providing activities for unemployed adults;
- premises owned/controlled by voluntary groups and charities;
- parish council meeting rooms;
- sports and leisure clubs;
- pubs and working men's clubs.

The process of identification and selection of outreach venues consisted of:

- an initial visit, telephone call or letter of introduction by the research worker to each facility explaining the aims of the project and setting up a longer meeting;
- a subsequent visit to inspect the premises for their adequacy for teaching purposes and to enquire as to the extent and frequency of their usage by the community and organised groups within the locality;
- a meeting with the management committee of each selected facility at which the research worker gave a short presentation on the project and discussed the possibilities of outreach courses being delivered on site; a decision was then sought from each management committee by the research worker;
- subsequent meetings as and when any clarifications or qualifications needed to be discussed.

Not all of the sites visited were suitable for the project as facilities for the delivery of outreach provision, while a handful of management committees were lukewarm about the idea of outreach, insisting that unemployed adults should make the effort to travel to college for education and training. Approximately 30% of the facilities visited by the research worker were considered inappropriate, for the following reasons:

- an accommodation rental charge would be asked of the college for the use of premises; the project had earlier decided to reject such consideration on the grounds that outreach education is complementary to the kind of community-based activities which many of these facilities are engaged in;
- a small number of sites had no spare rooming capacity at the time; usually it was agreed that the research worker would be informed as and when space became available;
- there was inadequate provision of heating, lighting and electricity supply;
- the site was physically isolated or distant from centres of local population;
- access to the facility was made difficult by rough terrain, steep hills or inadequate street lighting — exacerbated in winter months;
- the premises were in an exceptionally bad state of external repair and internal decoration;
- there was a poor utilisation rate by the local community, and especially by the target group of unemployed adults.

The task of mapping out potential venues, and the strategy of visiting and investigating each before the eventual compilation of appropriate facilities, was a lengthy and very time-consuming process. Indeed, this process occupied a significant proportion of the first half of the life of the project (9 months), together with the extending and maintaining of contact with the many and varied local groups throughout East Cleveland. One has to put the question whether or not this investment of time, and

therefore resources, was worth the effort. The project feels strongly that it was, and that, moreover, the maintenance of a comprehensive educational dialogue in the future is equally essential. The following points are offered in support of this view:

- Many more organisations and agencies are now aware of the outreach initiatives being implemented in local communities by Cleveland Technical College. This has produced support and commitment for the concept and the work of outreach, even though many organisations have not yet been directly involved.
- Of the 30 or so potential local learning centres visited, around two-thirds volunteered their resources for outreach purposes. Five such facilities have been used for outreach teaching, but the remainder represent a capital investment for the future — as yet untapped community-based resources which can be brought on stream as and when local needs are identified.
- The staff involved in organising various activities in centres can contribute in a positive way to needs analysis by communicating to the college any educational need they perceive through their work with unemployed adults and local groups using their facilities.
- Such centres can act as outlets for the dissemination of information on forthcoming outreach provision situated locally, even if this is not to be hosted in that particular centre.
- Outreach community development work as characterised by this process of identifying suitable outreach venues has also had the effect of raising the profile of the college in a very positive way throughout the local communities which make up its catchment area. Thus, whilst it is very difficult to quantify the impact, outreach development activities have contributed to main-site enrolments and have stimulated a greater volume of oblique enquirers to the college from different sections of the community, tangible results from which could emerge in the future.

THE OUTREACH MODULES

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION/STUDY SKILLS

This course was aimed at:

- those who would like to go on to study humanities or social sciences to degree level at Teesside Polytechnic;
- those who needed to develop study skills before starting Open University courses;
- those who would like to brush up on essay-writing, note-taking techniques, etc. to help with a wide variety of academic courses;
- those who wished to develop more effective communication skills for a variety of purposes.

The course was held in Loftus, situated 12 miles to the east of the college, at the community centre, which is situated in the middle of the town just off the main High Street. The centre is

administered by the Youth and Community Department of Cleveland County Council and provides accommodation and other facilities for several local groups, whose activities attract considerable numbers of local people. The Access module ran from September to December 1987 and formed the first of three modules which normally cover the academic year. The same module was being offered concurrently in college so that outreach students completing this first module could, if they wished, make the transition to college and complete the remaining two.

BASIC ELECTRONICS/DOMESTIC ELECTRICS

This course was aimed at men and women of any age who required an introduction at a basic level to electronics and domestic electrics, particularly electronic circuits and simple fault-finding in domestic appliances; the course allowed students to progress to the City and Guilds 726 Certificate.

The course was held at the Impasse Centre, Skelton, situated 7 miles from the college. The centre occupies a position in the middle of the High Street which divides the village in two. The Impasse Centre provides a range of activities for unemployed people on a drop-in basis. These include woodworking, handicrafts, snooker, table-tennis, etc., and have been successful in attracting the local unemployed. The centre employs six CP workers to organise and supervise such activities. The course was aimed at centre-users as well as the wider target group. It offered practical skills development in basic electronics and domestic electrics with the option to progress to college to continue study on the City and Guilds 726 Certificate.

COMMUNITY SPORTS LEADERS AWARD (CSLA)

This course was aimed at those adults who would like to learn how to coach people effectively and safely in their chosen sport or activity. The course led to a national qualification; a high level of sporting ability was not essential.

The course was held at the Grangetown Boys' Club, 5 miles to the west of the college. Despite its name, the Boys' Club attracts people largely between the ages of 18 and 30 to its gymnasium-based sports facilities and weight-lifting, snooker, table-tennis and large informal cafeteria lounge area. The club attracts large numbers of unemployed people — from an area with an average unemployment rate of around 39% — largely, though not exclusively, male. The Boys' Club is situated on the Trunk Road from Redcar to Middlesbrough, adjacent to a large council estate. As with other outreach provision, this course aimed to attract local unemployed people, some of whom already used the facilities of the club, or saw it as a meeting place, to kill time in the lounge area. It was hoped that at the end of the course students could be offered the advanced award at the college. In the event, this did not run. However, since Grangetown lies between two Cleveland colleges, students who wished to progress were referred to the one that offered the advanced course.

POTTERY FOR ADULTS

This course was aimed at men and women of any age who required a comprehensive introduction to the art of pottery and who wished to develop skills associated with the various pottery techniques. The course was designed to enable students to progress to further or advanced educational courses.

The course was held at Laurence Jackson School, a large comprehensive situated ten minutes' walk from the town centre of Guisborough, 8 miles to the south of the college. The links between the school and the local adult population consist of non-vocational AE classes. However, these classes tend to be offered only in the evenings, and at the time of the outreach course no adult pottery provision existed at the school. This course commenced in January and was to run until Easter though the students elected that it should continue — which it did — until the end of the academic year.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

The first three outreach courses — Access, Electronics/Electrics, and the CSLA — were offered from September to December 1987. It was the intention that they would not continue beyond the four months in order that the project could assess the extent to which outreach participation had generated a motivation to progress to main-site provision relevant to the learning activities students had experienced on outreach. The final course — Pottery — was extended to the end of the academic year partly because this was what the students wanted, but also because there was little extra benefit to be gained by students moving to college for the summer term since main-site pottery courses were either full or inappropriate.

EVALUATION OF THE FOUR OUTREACH MODULES

So far this chapter has described the outreach modules piloted through the project and the methodology used for their evaluation. Discussion has also focused on the process of identifying suitable venues for the delivery of outreach provision. The following pages are concerned with the actual evaluation of the modules which were delivered in a variety of outreach facilities. This evaluation had three components:

- statistical data on various background details of students as they commenced their course;
- an assessment of the curriculum design features of outreach provision;
- an end-of-course survey and a post-course investigation into student destinations

(See Appendix B for the questionnaires and interview schedules used in the evaluations.)

SOME STATISTICS RELATING TO THE FOUR OUTREACH COURSES

Forty-eight students enrolled on the four courses, of whom 27 were female and 21 male; 32 completed their course, 17 withdrew.

Publicity source

Local newspaper	12
Local radio	2
Poster/noticeboard	7
Friend or relative	5
From involvement in a local community group	17

Geographical area

From within walking distance of the local learning centre	29
Involving transport to the local learning centre	19

Age distribution

18-24 years	20
24-44 years	17
45-64 years	11

Employment status

Self-employed	1
On CP	8
Working part-time	5
Unemployed	31
Disabled	2
Housewife	1

Previous FE

Yes 16 (often students would interpret this as including local evening-class AE provision as well as college-based FE)

No 32

Previous use of the local learning centre

Yes 22

No 26 (one-third of this group consisted of students who were taking their course in the secondary school, a facility not normally used by adults for purposes other than educational)

Reasons for joining the course

Students were asked to select, in order of importance, from the following list of reasons why they joined the course:

(a) The course looked really interesting, just what I needed.

(b) The course was put on at a more convenient time/day than in college.

(c) The location of the course is nearer to home than is the college in Redcar.

(d) I didn't like the idea of going into a big education building; this place doesn't make you feel nervous.

The reasons why students enrolled are shown in Figure 1.

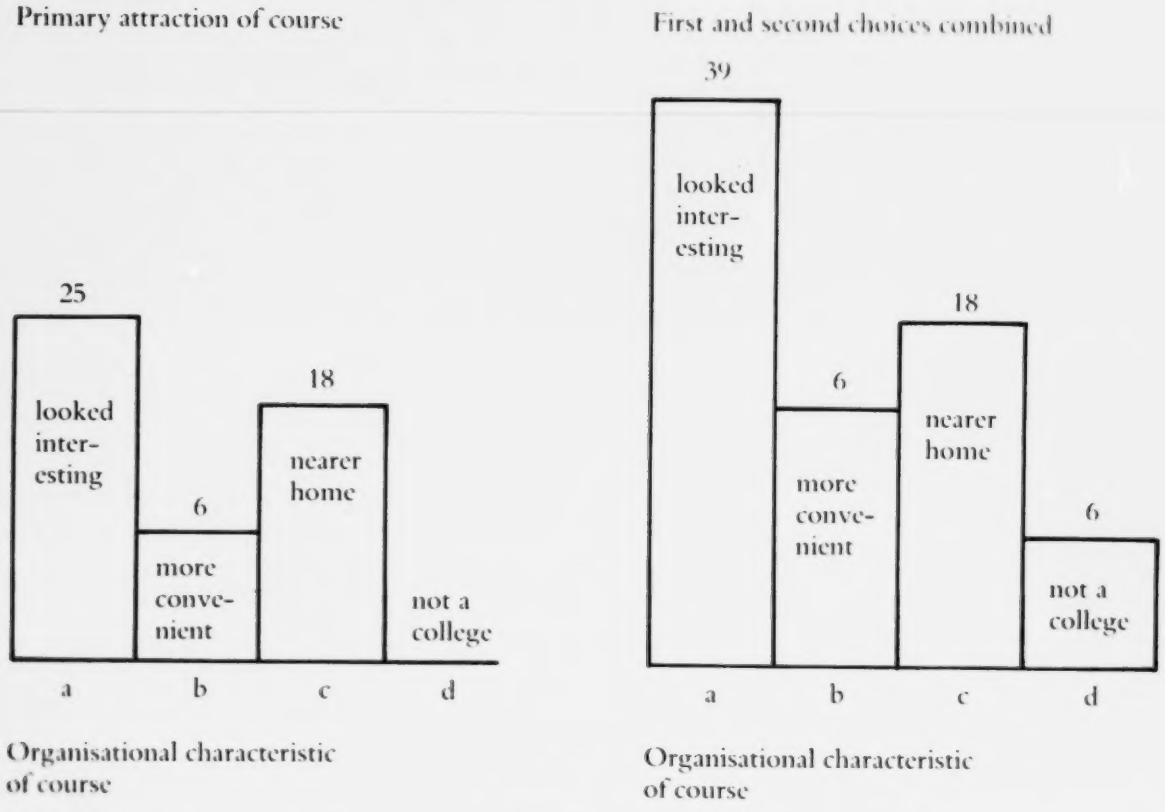

Figure 1: The reasons selected by students for enrolling on their course

STUDENT WITHDRAWAL FROM COURSE

Of the 48 students enrolled on the courses, 17 did not complete. The reasons were:

- secured employment or full-time vocational training (6 students)
- personal or domestic problems (child-care responsibilities, family crisis or personal reasons) (6)
- low level of motivation or lost interest in the course (4)
- problems coping with the course (1)

EQUALITY

As has been outlined earlier, equality in the learning experience of unemployed adults consists of a relationship of mutual respect between tutor and students, and this is characterised by an informal, friendly and empathetic style of teaching. The outreach course tutors were hand-picked on the basis of their personal skills in relating to unemployed adults as well as their proven professional abilities in their subject areas. Evidence from the outreach modules supports the argument that empathetic teaching styles encourage both personal confidence and skills

development in students. Students are often motivated by the enthusiasm which tutors bring to their teaching, and the outreach courses highlighted the crucial role that student-centred styles of teaching play in effective delivery. For example, the outreach domestic electrics/electronics course tutor was from the local community where the course was put on. He had previous experience working in local industry and had himself felt the effects of unemployment. This background helped him to empathise strongly with the students' perspective and, together with a friendly, 'down-to-earth' personality, produced a relationship of equality between himself and the students.

Equality, therefore, is not something which can be imposed either way. In part, it has to emerge as a consequence of the relationship between student and tutor, which above all is characterised by the way a tutor is able to respond to the situation of his/her student group. For example:

> 'It might sound a bit of a contradiction when talking about the unemployed but you can't hold them to a rigid timetable. They have to feel that they don't have to come every week and you can't sort of force that on them. Strict timekeeping is not what these people want; so you start a course, it should run and they should feel they can drop in any time while it's running.' (Course tutor.)

In accepting the variable attendance rates of many of his students, the tutor was not simply recognising that unemployed adults are primarily engaged in the search for work, but recognising also that being out of work tends to undermine personal routine, and indeed the need for such routine. To insist on regular attendance, even for the session per week, might be to impose an extra dimension of stress unacceptable to many unemployed adults.

At the end of each course, students were asked to indicate from a list what for them had been valuable aspects of their outreach course. All students on each course agreed that a valuable aspect of their course was that 'the teaching had been informal and friendly'. Several students highlighted this as the most valuable characteristic of the course. In an interview, one student emphasised the point thus:

> 'The atmosphere of the course was great, very different than what I expected it to be, very much more enjoyable, and the tutor is a very approachable person, a very nice guy which makes it all the more easy for you, if you were finding difficulty. I didn't feel embarrassed about saying, "Look, I find this difficult". A mature person coming back into education I think is one of the most difficult things, you are mortified at the thought of being made a fool of, but this situation would never arise with someone like Tom. He has been a very good person to run a course like this, that's what I feel about him personally.'

NEGOTIATION

If student motivation is enhanced by an informal learning environment and an empathetic tutor, it can develop further by students' having a real say in what happens on the course. The organisation of these outreach courses enabled students to jointly

negotiate aspects of the curriculum with the tutor. This enabled students to see their course as being directly relevant to their educational needs rather than a predetermined unalterable set of learning exercises with little potential for student input. Extracts from interviews with the electrics/electronics tutor and his students illustrate this process of negotiation:

> 'I thought, well, I'm trying to get people to come back to education, so I used the first session as a taster and took most of what was feasible to do up there in terms of electronics and servicing equipment in two suitcases. In this first session, I gave them so many options more or less compatible with the C&G 726. I guided them towards domestic servicing because these people may not have very much money and they have electrical appliances at home which they can't afford to get fixed. They all wanted to bring in their duff gear and see if it could be fixed. They learned about circuits and components by finding out what was wrong with the appliance and sometimes they could end up with it fixed for a nominal cost.' (Course tutor.)

Here the tutor responded to the group's wish for domestic servicing by providing them with the skills to undertake fault-finding. This involved an understanding of the basic principles of electrical circuits, functions of components and circuit testing methods. Moreover, because these relatively theoretical aspects were given concrete form in faulty appliances, students were able immediately to see the relevance of abstract exercises to their own learning needs. The students decided generally what they wanted to do and the tutor helped them develop the skills to do it:

> 'Well, I was expecting, when it first started, that we'd be given packages. I was expecting that we'd sit at a desk, be given a package to work on and start reading and writing. At the first session he came into the room and started explaining to us that we could do what we wanted to do. If we wanted to look at the components, we could read the leaflets first and go on our way. Alan showed us how to make a circuit and then let us get on, it was great. Once we started getting it together he showed us how everything worked. I was expecting to just get shoved in the corner.' (Student.)

In the student questionnaire, 98% of participants on the four courses agreed that 'having a say in what you did' was a valuable aspect of their course. Negotiating the curriculum does not mean that students decide on all aspects of a course or have the power of veto. To hold such a view would be to question whether the tutor had any role to play in helping students articulate course-related needs or in designing teaching and learning strategies to effectively meet such needs.

Negotiation implies at least a certain openness. It involves a dialogue between tutor and student group as a two-way process of communication within which experiences, expectations and ambitions can be fully disclosed and considered in planning the content and character of the provision. In marketing terms, one might say it is the final matching of student needs to the

provision, at a micro level, that of the course itself. The aim of negotiation therefore, is to arrive at a consensus, a mutual endorsement of what should be attempted on the course, how the course should be structured and how learning activities should be organised.

Although the character and extent of negotiation will differ from place to place, from one group to the next and between different types of provision, the atmosphere within which negotiation takes place should reflect these criteria. Negotiation did contribute to the success of these courses. Almost all students agreed it was a valuable aspect, and some had changed their perception of FE from that of a distant, impersonal and authoritarian entity to that of a relevant, student-centred and participatory arrangement, where the views of students not only meant something but could be acted upon.

However, on the Access course the concept of negotiation was interpreted less comprehensively and did not feature as an ongoing system of communication between tutor and students throughout the life of the course. Nor did it fully cover the length of sessions and level of teaching, as the following extracts from student interviews conducted at the end of the course show:

> 'Well, I felt that the information we were given was a lot. We had to read that information, try and understand it, try and take notes on it, try and write an essay on it. So you had to have a lot of skills to do that, and it was a lot of information to do that on and I thought that we were expected to go home and do this and bring it back last week. I thought it was going to be easy to do that, but it totally blew my mind; I was thinking, "I must be thick, I'm finding this really difficult". I was really unsure of myself, it really sort of knocked me back because I was worried about, "Am I taking the rights notes, how do you form an essay?" I mean it's years since I wrote an essay, I thought, "God, it's going to take me all week just to take the notes, never mind start writing an essay". I got to the point where I said, "I'm not going to go back because I'm too thick", but then when you marked it I thought, "I'm not thick". I really did worry myself a lot about it and I know some of the others did.'

And on the length of each session:

> 'I felt that I needed to be in a classroom environment because I needed a pat on the head, the guidance from the teacher to give me some initial encouragement. I still think that the course should last for longer, even the full day, with perhaps a little less emphasis on what you do at home. By nature of the fact that it is only two hours, we would get so little done, that obviously we had to do a lot of work at home.'

> 'I think it would've been beneficial if the course could've lasted for even three hours because I think it's very good to be able to speak together as a group not just within a time limit, but we were so pushed for time that there were certain things that we should've discussed in class, but we had to get on.'

These constraints relate to the overall design features of the course. This suggests that student-centredness in the design of courses is incomplete without reference to continuing student appraisal throughout the life of the course. In this case, for example, negotiation (of the length of sessions and the level of teaching) should feature as a **process** rather than as a compact entered into initially between tutor and students, and binding thereafter. The concept of negotiation as employed on this course was effective and was valued by the students; indeed, 75% recorded negotiating as a valuable aspect of the course. The concept of negotiation should, therefore, be given as wide an interpretation as possible and should feature throughout the life of the course. One student left the course feeling that she had failed, whereas there are grounds to suggest that the course had failed her. In essence the course attempted, in two hours per week, what would be expected of students in college doing the same course for one day per week. As the student said, 'You asked too much of me too soon'. With so many FE courses, students in learning groups are as varied in their attainment levels on starting a course as they are in intellectual development during their studies — and this course was no exception. At least two other students said that they would have left the course had its pace and intensity been significantly less demanding of them. However, it is equally reasonable to suggest that a sustained process of negotiation would have identified these problems sooner. This would have enabled effective action to have been taken and perhaps prevented this student from leaving the course.

MODULARISATION AND PROGRESSION

Modularisation and progression are closely related in the organisation of outreach provision. As was earlier discussed, a student-centred approach would offer modular courses which enabled unemployed adults to make a positive commitment to short-term FE while maintaining the search for employment. The outreach courses piloted in this project were free-standing modules, but they also enjoyed a 'design-fit' to provide a bolt-on continuity to other modular provision, particularly to main-site activities and the possibility of advancement to certification as a student's confidence and interest might develop. Indeed, 65% of the outreach students agreed that one of the valuable aspects of their course was that it 'could lead to a qualification'. Thus, any discussion of student motivation should include the fillip given to personal motivation by the possibility of progression. Adult students often make comments to the effect that if they are successful on a course, if they find they can do it, they will then go on to something else. Moreover, the 'something else' is very often seen in terms of deepening an educational commitment within areas of current learning rather than spreading to embrace a more comprehensive range of opportunities. Often, therefore, the present course is seen as a means rather than an end, a stage in a personal journey towards educational success, even though the destination remains uncertain. Five of the seven students who completed the electronics course thought the opportunity it gave to progress to gain a qualification was important. One student on the electronics course, who thought this was the most valuable aspect of the course, went on to main-site provision at the college to take the remaining parts of the City and Guilds 726 certificate.

Another student, not quite ready to take up main-site opportunities, nevertheless welcomed the possibility of progression:

> 'I think it's great. I don't know what it's like in the college; as I said, it's not my thing to go into college, but I've been thinking about it now, like if this course kept going, maybe go to college once I've got further into it. I'd probably get so interested in it that I'd have to go to college.'

Another student — this time on the outreach pottery course — commented:

> 'It would've been no good for me to say, "Right, this year I'll go in for 'O' level in pottery" and then dive into it brand new here. Now I would say, if I fancied doing it, "I'd like to have a go at that because I've covered some of the groundwork here and I've got the confidence to go in for a proper course, an examination course".'

Progression to college was equally important to the course tutors in the context of outreach as an access mechanism to FE, with outreach providing FE with a sharper relevance. For example:

> 'You're trying to get them back into college, because if you take FE out there, people must see the limitations of doing it out there, the problems of equipment, etc., etc., so they might say, "Well if they can do this out here and they're teaching like this and treating us as adults, we're not treated like children at school", I think they will say, "Well, why do we have to come here, we can go to the tech and they've got more equipment".' (Outreach electronics course tutor.)

The concept of progression means that courses, having been identified, need to be designed on the basis of what outreach students can progress to in college, if this is what they want. Colleges embarking on outreach initiatives will need to ensure that a logical continuity links outreach provision to main-site opportunities, as in this case between the outreach electronics/basic electrics course and the college-based City and Guilds 726 course.

At the end of their outreach course, students were asked to select from a list of statements what personally they had achieved from their course. All students agreed that they now had 'more knowledge and skills in the areas the course was concerned with', while only 39% agreed that the course had 'improved my job prospects'. The most consistent positive scoring was in areas to do with confidence and perceived ability. Thus, 74% agreed that 'I have developed more confidence in myself', and 71% agreed that 'the course has given me a stronger belief in my ability to achieve educational success'. When asked to single out the most important personal achievement, two-thirds of students emphasised one or other of these two statements. In-depth student interview conducted at the same time provided greater depth to these figures. For example, in the Access module, students in interview would invariably link confidence with a recognition of personal educational ability:

> 'Stimulation, it's got the old brain going again. It's made me feel that perhaps I do have a chance and perhaps I do have

the ability to go on to higher education, whereas when I first came here it was just a big question mark. I had no real confidence in my ability at all. That has changed considerably and I don't mean that I have great confidence but I feel very much more that there is a possibility that I could. I've enjoyed it and it's been very hard work, it will be nice when the Christmas holidays come.'

On specific skills development, another student commented on course outcomes in relation to her work with a local women's self-help group:

'Things like knowing what to say instead of waffling on in a letter, knowing what's relevant and knowing that I can actually write something down and know that it will be understood.'

'I can write now, I think, which has a lot to do with the course, because I'm writing it in a way where I think about the person who's reading it and not about what's in my head.'

REACHING THE UNEMPLOYED

66% of participants in the outreach courses had not previously taken an FE course and, therefore, represent traditional non-participants in FE. 54% of the students — excluding those who took the school-based pottery course — had used the local learning centre before, and this eased the acceptance of it as an outreach local learning centre for most of these traditional non-participants. This evidence again suggests that, in identifying local learning centres, providers of outreach should adopt the principle that if people go to a place for social activities they might stay there or return for educational ones.

FUTURE COURSES AND READINESS TO GO TO COLLEGE

Twenty-three students (74%) had either decided to do another course or were seriously considering doing one.

Eighteen students (58%) felt 'more ready' to take a course at the college in Redcar having done one on outreach. No students considered themselves 'less ready', while for the remaining 13 (42%) the outreach course had made 'no difference' to their readiness to attend the college.

STUDENT DESTINATIONS

Two months after the end of each course, students who had completed were contacted and asked about any current employment and education, what future plans they had, whether they were involved in any group, and reflections on the course.

Employment status

The unemployment status of most participants remained unchanged. Of those who had secured work, one had been taken on with a CP scheme as a Rape Crisis Centre Worker and reported that the increase in confidence she felt after doing the course had enabled her to give a good interview for the job. As she put it:

'You know, in an interview you sit there and think they are all highly educated and different but knowing you can be too, and knowing that tutors are human and equal gives you confidence.'
(Student from the Access module.)

Three students from the CSLA module were in work. Two had secured part-time work in youth and community activities, and one had been made a full-time youth and community worker from an earlier part-time position. The three in work commented that they had perceived the CSLA course in terms which were complementary to other activities and longer-term plans associated with voluntary sports organisation and career ambitions in the area of youth and community work. Some of the five who remained unemployed, nevertheless, held the same perceptions. As a respondent put it:

'I feel a step closer towards work with young people, group work and the way I handle and manage groups in sports activities.'

Present education

In total, 43% of students who completed their outreach modules progressed to other college-based courses. Most enrolled at Cleveland Technical College, although some were referred to, and enrolled at, two other local FE institutions.

Future plans

Very few respondents had no plans for future education or employment ambitions. The majority of those who had made plans to take advantage of educational provision in the future recorded their intentions in terms of more advanced courses of the type undertaken on outreach. For example, six out of the eight students who completed the Access module had decided to pursue degree courses in Humanities or Social Sciences; and half of those who completed the CSLA intended to take the advanced course. The employment plans of participants were also related to the outreach courses taken. Thus, social work and teaching figured prominently in the employment ambitions of those who had taken the Access course, while youth and community work was often mentioned as part of future employment plans for those who took the CSLA. Most of the participants from the Outreach modules had, therefore, sustained a high level of interest in education and had maintained a strong sense of personal motivation, even after their initial course had ceased for some two months.

Involvement with voluntary or other groups

One-third of the students were involved in community-based activities of various kinds via their membership of voluntary associations or other groups. These students reported that their outreach module had helped them become more effective in these activities. Some indicated they that felt more confident in getting further involved with their group, having developed better communication skills. Other students took up group membership and voluntary activities as a result of their course. For example, three unemployed participants were actively

involved with the Boys' Club — before the course as users of the centre, but after the course as organisers/supervisors of a wide range of sport and leisure activities, in a voluntary capacity:

> 'I used to be short of confidence, especially in meeting new people and group staff. I used to stand by a wall and blow a whistle if I ever refereed and was always afraid it would backfire and the kids would not get involved and refuse. Now I join in, take charge, get involved in all sorts — snooker league and darts league as well as sports.'

Reflections

Students were asked, with hindsight, what for them had been the single most valuable and enduring outcome of their course. For students who had taken the Access course, many of the comments concerned study skills techniques — essay writing, etc. — but were located within a broader context, always that of confidence and self-realisation. For example:

> 'It filled in a vacuum with self-confidence and made me realise what I can do — even if I don't.'

> 'Getting together some self-respect and recognition of my own capacity; a sound basic confidence in myself I suppose.'

> 'It gave me tremendous confidence, especially to sit in a formal college classroom.'

The general feelings as expressed by the group from the electronics module reflect those of students on other outreach courses. Comments combined the qualities of skills development with personal confidence development. Thus, for example:

> 'Before, I didn't have the guts to go to college, now I feel more confident, especially after doing this course and being able to trace faults in electrical circuits.' (Unemployed student.)

> 'I feel more confident about doing minor jobs and knowing what not to tackle.' (Unemployed student.)

Students from the remaining two courses offered comments in a similar vein to those above. Typically, such responses to the initial question would have the skills development relevant to their module being highlighted as the most significant and lasting outcome of the course. Students on the pottery module invariably commented on techniques using the potting wheel, firing and finishing of the product. With regard to the CSLA, many of the responses were concerned with the sports organisational skills which had been developed. For example:

> 'I didn't know anything about team-work or non-competitive games. Now I do, and this helps me with support to voluntary groups.'

> '... the way you learnt to handle groups, not letting them get bored: structure the activities in the proper stages like not giving out the equipment first and then start speaking to them or you've lost them.' (Unemployed student.)

Other reflections — from a majority of students — also tended to point to skills development but did so in a way which suggested that such skills were the vehicle via which the most enduring quality of the course was established — confidence:

> 'I feel a lot more confident in myself and in being able to make good use of limited facilities and get more activities going. It helped me with confidence getting this job and I'm off to America this year to summer camp.' (Part-time worker with the Cleveland County 'Unemployed Project', developing activities for the unemployed.)

> 'The course lifted my depression with being unemployed. It gave me something to look forward to on a Thursday — a bit like work experience.' (Unemployed person, now on a Restart programme.)

THE TEACHING VENUES

One of the prime considerations for the identification of suitable venues is that such facilities should be places which are used by the local community for a variety of different purposes and which attract people of different age groups and backgrounds and both sexes. In particular, such venues should be facilities that are used by local unemployed people. One example of how this criterion can have positive outcomes is that of the Impasse Centre, Skelton, which hosted the basic electronics/domestic electrics course. Several of the students joined this course because the centre was 'nearer to home than is the college in Redcar'. Linked to this was their active involvement with the centre prior to the start of the course. Two students were CP workers based at the Impasse Centre; the remainder were unemployed people who used its craft and leisure facilities — usually woodworking and snooker. Only one lived beyond walking distance of the centre. Only one student in this group had any previous experience of FE, and that was a negative one:

> 'I was only there for three weeks, but on the plumbing side of it — we never actually got to do any plumbing. It was just pictures of tools on the wall. He never showed any tools or passed them around the class.'

> 'I just hated sitting in the classroom, reading off the blackboard. We were just like robots. It was boring at times.' (Male CP worker, mid-20s.)

During monitoring of the course and in discussions with this group, it became apparent that joining the course had presented an opportunity to further extend their range of activities within the centre; the subject basis of the course seemed less important. Moreover, the interesting point that has emerged is that it was not simply outreach which brought them to FE, but outreach located in their centre:

> 'In here you feel comfortable and part of what's going on. In a place like this we're all in the same situation. You get to know people and it's more homely, I think.' (Unemployed male, early 20s.)

Informal discussions with students during the course, and student interviews when it ended, tend to suggest that the relaxed

atmosphere and non-institutional, non-threatening environment helped develop and strengthen the motivation of many students, particularly the group who were not naturally receptive to FE. It would appear that the informal setting produced a positive attitude in some students which then enabled them to cope with the more demanding aspects of the course. One student compared his experience of college with that of the Impasse Centre:

> 'When I went to do the course that I was on before, I was just shoved in a classroom and showed stuff on the blackboards. I'm not interested in just sitting in a classroom all day unless it's like this — just a room where it's more friendly and you know everyone. There's no blackboards on the wall, everything's explained as you come to it.'

The 'blackboard' appears as the metaphor for formality in college, whilst its absence from the walls of the centre reflects a more appropriate learning setting from the student's perspective.

In the end-of-course survey, 61% of respondents on all four Outreach modules agreed with the statement 'The location of the course made me feel more at ease than if I went into a large college'.

For colleges that are considering outreach strategies in order to attract more unemployed adults to FE, the implication would seem clear. It is not sufficient to identify a potential centre based on the narrow criteria of suitability for teaching purposes. It would seem equally important that an appropriate centre should be a facility used by the local community, and in particular used by the specific target groups which the provisions is designed to help. Possibly a major reason why this group joined the course was that it was put on in a centre over which the group had a sense of ownership and control, and in an environment where they felt they belonged.

PUBLICITY: TWO EXAMPLES

Loftus

Students found their way onto the course mainly via a local community group or by a newspaper advertisement. Interestingly, the *Whitby Gazette*, a North Yorkshire publication which enjoys a wide readership in Loftus, and which published an article on the Outreach Project (*Whitby Gazette*, 13 February 1987), brought most students to the course by this means, with two students travelling each week from Whitby itself. Two points emerge here:

- By picking up on local patterns of newspaper consumption, a more cost-effective strategy of advertising investment is possible for new types of provision, which, by definition, have not built up a self-sustaining reservoir of primary and secondary clients.
- The two students from Whitby represent an increasing trickle of people from North Yorkshire travelling to Cleveland for education and training. This is because residents outside Cleveland are becoming aware of new and popular forms of provision which are primarily aimed at Cleveland residents;

these Cleveland non-residents, nevertheless, receive the same message, and for some people distance may be less of a barrier to access. This poses interesting and certainly challenging questions concerning co-operation and collaboration between adjacent LEAs if the educational needs of unemployed adults are to be effectively addressed, irrespective of the administrative geography they happen to be part of.

Skelton

One-third of the students found out about the course from a combination of posters, leaflets and friends and relatives. Compared to other forms of recruitment, these methods of publicising the course were not considered to be efficacious. A considerable amount of time was spent designing and printing posters and leaflets. The whole of one Saturday was spent distributing leaflets in and around the local area where the course was to be located, and a small group of volunteers from the Impasse Centre carried on this work the following week before the commencement of the course.

Another third of the students arrived at the start of the course after reading a small article in a free local newspaper, delivered to every household, which outlined the Outreach project and gave details of the course. There was no cost involved since the article was placed as an editorial piece. These students had no previous connection with the local learning centre and had travelled to it from adjacent villages.

The remaining third enrolled on the course via their existing involvement with the Impasse Centre either as centre-based CP workers or as unemployed people using its facilities.

The research worker noted, and the tutor has confirmed that, many other centre-users would wander into the learning area to observe the activities of the student group, ask questions and make comments on the various pieces of equipment and exercises undertaken, but they did not eventually join in. Their reasons were evasive — 'missed too much of the course', 'could not make it regularly enough' and so on — despite reassurances that such problems need not prevent them from enrolling. This group, typically young unemployed men, had become curious and had developed an interest in the course, but this had not moved further to direct participation. In discussion with some of the students who were friends of these sideline observers, it became apparent that the problem or barrier was one of taking the step from personal interest to personal commitment. However, some of the students commented that, from talking to their friends about the course informally, perhaps six or seven would be ready to join the next time it was offered.

This process of incidental marketing should not be ignored. By being free to observe learning activities in an informal and open environment, non-participants in FE may be encouraged to join future courses. Similarly, recommendation of the course from existing students can provide an added stimulus for outreach initiatives which seek to attract the unemployed to FE. Unlike many college courses, outreach does not yet have a history of

satisfied clients, and therefore does not enjoy the support of large numbers of people who, by word of mouth, contribute to an institution's marketing and publicity efforts.

Different forms of publicity are likely to have different results, and colleges will no doubt apply modes which reflect their own specific circumstances. The experience of this course has been to highlight the cost-effectiveness of the traditional newspaper article together with support from the Impasse Centre itself. And, by locating the course in a facility used by the unemployed, a coincidental investment may have been made for the success of future outreach provision.

PUBLICITY: GENERAL

The local newspaper brought 25% of the students to their courses, and with some surprising results. On three courses a minority of students travelled considerable distances to their course, and with the CSLA two students actually had to pass the college gates and travel a further 5 miles to arrive at their course. The point is not to open a debate between the prospectus and other methods of course information, but to indicate that expenditure on outreach publicity can have the effect of increasing college enrolments by people who could more conveniently travel to college.

More than a third of the students found out about their course either from their involvement in a local community group or from their use of the local learning centre. With both, however, information on the course was gained by using the facility for purposes other than education. In each of the centres used for outreach courses, publicity was designed and exhibited by the centre staff, who were also in a position to explain the courses more fully to enquirers, having previously been briefed by the research worker. This form of publicity is not only free, but more fully involves staff in centres with outreach work.

SUMMARY

This chapter has considered the aims of outreach in the context of increasing the participation rates of unemployed adults in FE; the project was particularly concerned to reach those adults who traditionally do not take up further education opportunities of any kind. It attempted to do this by taking modules of education and training out into the community in order to address real barriers which prevent unemployed adults from taking up main-site learning activities and to deliver such provision in a variety of facilities used by the local community, and in particular by the specific target group. In most aspects these modules were successful in reaching unemployed adults, the bulk of whom had no previous experience of FE. Many of the participants changed their perceptions of FE as a result of their experience on the courses, which students recognised as being relevant and appropriate to their needs. The proportion of outreach students who went on to further learning opportunities was approaching half, two months after their outreach course had ended; and student feedback at this time reflected a generalised and sustained increase in the levels of confidence and motivation, the feeling by participants that their course had been organised for them and around them, rather than around its subject area.

The design features concerning the organisation and delivery of outreach provision have been evaluated in this chapter. In their evaluation, evidence has been offered for the educational relevance and effectiveness of these design features in developing confidence and motivation within unemployed adults. In view of this, the concepts of **equality, negotiation, modularisation** and **progression** should feature in the outreach provision design strategies of colleges which are committed to exploring the most appropriate ways to take education to the community.

This chapter has underlined the need to modularise areas of main-site provision. Progression for outreach students to college must be catered for by modular course structures within college if the transition is to reflect a logical continuity of study and be recognised as such by students. A student-centred approach to outreach will be undermined if progression routes to college are severely limited or non-existent.

Suitable outreach venues need to be identified in areas where the population density and levels of unemployed are significant enough to justify outreach resource allocation in terms of both development activity and course delivery. Specific venues need to be identified primarily on the basis of their utilisation rate by the local community, especially the unemployed.

The college has established contact and developed links with the wide variety of local groups that make up the local community. Many such groups used the outreach venues for reasons other than education and helped to provide:

- a 'core' student group for outreach initiatives;
- a marketing function aimed at primary clients (traditional non-participants) via local family and other social networks;
- colleges with a local perspective on the educational needs of unemployed adults and a contribution towards strategies to meet such needs.

The chapter has also pointed to the need to develop effective working relationships with local professionals and other local agencies involved in work with unemployed adults in order to:

- facilitate the detailed logistical arrangements which support outreach initiatives (for example, room bookings and use of other resources);
- establish mechanisms for referral of clients to other agencies such as AE classes, the WEA, etc.

Outreach courses should be realistic in their aims rather than attempt too much too soon, and in a limited period of time. One of the main constraints felt by half the students on the outreach course was that 'the sessions were too short; there was not enough time to cover the work'. Outreach courses, initially at least, should be seen as introductory modules which have the aim of developing the confidence and motivation of students towards more extensive study in greater depth. This can be organised either by successive outreach modules when the specific subject area allows, or by transition to college-based courses.

Outreach is seen as an arm of college provision — as an access mechanism to main-site opportunities as much as it is a vehicle to FE generally. Outreach is, therefore, a flexible response to the immediate, ongoing and future needs of unemployed adults. With the exception of the pottery course, the outreach modules were not extended beyond their designated life since one of the aims was to assess their effectiveness as springboards into mainstream FE. However, future outreach courses should not only maintain this option for progression to college, but maintain also the possibility of progressing on outreach.

Publicity for the outreach courses piloted on this project has confirmed the efficacy of using traditional methods — specifically, the use of local newspaper articles to publicise local courses — and a new method, that of the local learning centre where the course is to be held.

5. INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

In various parts of the previous chapter the view began to emerge, explicitly as well as implicitly, that successful outreach initiatives, particularly if they are to go beyond the piloting of courses in local communities, will hinge upon the support given to them by the providing college. Institutional support is, therefore, the focus of this chapter, with two closely related concerns also being discussed:

- Institutional support in the form of administrative arrangements for outreach provision, resourcing of such provision and college policy implications for the attention of senior management level personnel.
- Issues of curriculum development which have significant implications for the organisation of main-site provision and how they relate to outreach; these issues centre on modularisation and progression.
- Staff development implications which have arisen from the experience of the outreach modules delivered through the project and which point to the need for a staff development programme which is both holistic and ongoing within the institution.

These concerns are described and discussed in this chapter, which is organised and structured around:

- Institutional support: a two-stage monitoring of the attitudes of senior college management towards outreach provision.
- Staff development: this describes the staff development needs which have emerged from constraints experienced in the delivery of outreach provision; and a staff development programme which sought to address such needs in the context of the overall project.

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

In the early stages of the project, it was decided that interviews should be held with college staff holding senior management positions in order to establish generally the range of attitudes towards outreach. Views were sought from heads of department on the future development of outreach as part of the college's responsibility of serving AE and training needs within the community. These interviews formed part of a continuous monitoring of the perceptions of and attitudes towards outreach by college management throughout the life of the project, as information on outreach developments in the action research was fed back to them. This was recognised as important also because the success of outreach initiatives, especially in the longer term, would depend partly on the active support given by this tier of college personnel.

INITIAL INTERVIEWS

When the project had been under way for three months, its aims and objectives together with the action plan were explained to

heads of department. Interviews were then held. Each interview followed the same schedule (see Appendix C), which focused on six areas of discussion:

- departmental policy towards the unemployed;
- policy-related attitudes towards outreach;
- resourcing;
- funding;
- staffing;
- the future.

Departmental policy towards the unemployed

Only one respondent indicated that his department was making efforts to organise provision targeted on the adult unemployed, and this was through the MSC SCOPE scheme. Two more felt favourably disposed to special provision, though one head of department commented that '... we don't make any distinction in our department between the employed and the unemployed'. Only one head had any idea of the student composition on courses in terms of employed and unemployed or the broad geographic locations from which students came. Most thought their department should become more active in providing educational and training opportunities specifically related to the unemployed, although one commented that 'We deal with specialist activities which are just as valuable for unemployed people as they are for employed', rejecting the notion that the organisation and nature of courses should be viewed any differently between the two groups.

Policy-related attitudes to Outreach

All but one respondent thought that outreach would lead to a greater involvement in FE by the unemployed. Only one had any experience of his department's being involved in community-based outreach, and this had presented challenges to members of staff 'to set it up in the appropriate way', but they nevertheless had 'been able to use their own initiative in many instances without having direct support'. This head of department emphasised that 'instead of taking out a pre-ordained package we need to be taking out something that's negotiable in terms of its detail'. All respondents indicated that their department could have a role to play in outreach provision, and when asked to indicate what this might be they tended to point to basic or introductory courses which '... would then lead to a desire by the people taking those courses to have a follow-up within the college using our equipment'. Problems and constraints associated with outreach were identified in terms of resources — for example, the travelling time, which, it was felt, would commit full-time staff to disproportionately large amounts of non-class-contact hours, and the timetabling problems this would produce within the college department. On the question of outreach students jointly negotiating their course with the college, only one disagreed with this participatory element, with the comment, 'I don't think that students can contribute all that much and I hope that doesn't sound too reactionary'.

Resources and funding

Priority in the application of departmental resources seemed to be attached to courses for full-time students, who are considered to be the major element in attracting funding to the college from the LEA. As one head of department put it: 'The system is stacked against priority being given to adults, especially outreach for the unemployed'. For all the respondents, course priorities (related to a resource environment which was becoming increasingly limited) were: full-time provision of various types, traditional vocational courses and general education, with outreach appearing at the end of the list.

Staffing

Staff were allocated to classes either on the basis of self-selection or by the head of department allocating 'the most appropriate staff to the appropriate classes' — a procedure that was largely based on subject specialisms. None offered the criterion of matching personal strengths of lecturers with the characteristics of different groups of students. Thus, the issue of empathetic styles of teaching conducive to the effective learning of unemployed adult students lacking in confidence was not considered by any of the heads of department. Not surprisingly, therefore, the area of staff development had received little attention from any respondent. When pressed on the subject, most considered staff development in safe, vague and very general terms such as '... giving staff the confidence to undertake their duties outside the college'. One head of department remained unimpressed: 'I'm not convinced about this personally, not in our area, because if you've got the right resources, the right equipment, it is just as easy for a professional lecturer with experience to teach in a working men's club as it is to do so here'. However, two department heads said they would be willing to timetable for specific staff development if it was requested, in order that lecturers could more effectively assume greater responsibility for their work in outreach teaching situations.

The future

Historically, the college has tended to serve the needs of employed day-release students, but the decline in the numbers of such students has yet to be matched by a corresponding decline in day-release vocational courses. Many of these courses now have a high proportion of unemployed students enrolled on them. One head of department was actively encouraging the reorganisation of some departmental provision to shorter, modular training opportunities; the remainder, however, were not. One stated that '... there is quite a vast demand from unemployed people to take traditional day-release courses. Unemployed people realise that this will put them on a par with employed people if they can get the same qualifications in the same way, and will point them in the right direction towards finding a job'. The fact that, increasingly, more unemployed people were taking traditional courses was seen as a validation of these courses by the unemployed; however, a different interpretation of this phenomenon might be that traditional vocational courses still

represent the major offering by FE. The only alternatives for the unemployed would seem to be a different provider or no course at all.

Summary of initial interviews

These interviews reflect attitudes towards unemployed adults and outreach-related issues ranging from indifference and some insensitivity to enthusiasm and a readiness for active involvement. Most heads of department were beginning to consider special provision for the unemployed, and in one department such provision was well established. All but one welcomed outreach as a mechanism to reach the unemployed. The same individuals saw in outreach a potential entry point into college-based provision, and they were positive about student participation or negotiation as part of the process of responding to the needs of unemployed adults.

However, in certain areas there was little place for optimism. All heads tended to place outreach fairly low on their list of priorities when compared with other provision, notably full-time courses. But perhaps most relevant for this chapter is that no head of department had realised the crucial role of staff development in the context of outreach teaching and course organisation, nor the importance of selecting outreach staff on the basis of their empathetic qualities as well as their subject specialisms. One head of department remained largely indifferent towards any specific needs associated with unemployed adult students, and was unconvinced as to the potential benefits of outreach generally. Without the active support of departmental heads the potential for outreach initiatives in any college will be severely limited, and where such initiatives do emerge they will inevitably suffer a debilitating and brief life from lack of support from senior college management. Staff development, therefore, in the context of outreach provision must be aimed at college managers at least as much as at the staff who deliver the courses.

Second-round interviews

The process of monitoring the attitudes of college management towards outreach continued six months later in September 1987 after institutional changes had taken place which marked the end of the traditional college departmental structure and the introduction of a matrix system of administration. Essentially the new development is characterised at management level by the Vice-Principal and heads of department assuming new roles as functional directors, as follows:

- Director of College Development (Vice-Principal)
- Director of Cross-College Provision
- Director of Curriculum Development
- Director of Staff and Student Affairs
- Director of Resources

This next round of interviews, which included the Principal and Vice-Principal, also took place shortly after the administrative restructuring of the college. The interviews have to be seen in the context of a directorate which was still in the detailed process of identifying its role and the specific responsibilities of each director. These interviews reflect the perceptions of reassigned

senior management in relation to their new 'functional' or thematic responsibilities. The interviews also sought to identify any incipient policy that directors might be formulating towards outreach. Given the developing nature of these positions, the results of the interviews do give grounds for considerable optimism in the area of institutional support for outreach initiatives.

Institutional support: policy and resources

The Principal felt that the matrix system is designed to make the college more responsive to changes outside the college, be they to do with student needs or from the requirements of examination bodies, '... so a much shallower hierarchical structure of sections supported by directors seemed far more appropriate than a much deeper hierarchical structure led by heads of department'. Outreach was but one example of the need for institutional change to reflect and respond to changing educational needs. The Principal saw outreach as a way of signalling to the community the college's changing role. As well as its social and educational value, outreach is valuable as a public relations mechanism for greater awareness and communication between the college and the community. As such, outreach '... is a vitally important part of the strategy of the college serving the community'. Internally, the various college sections — groups of teaching staff brought together around related subject areas — would be largely responsible for the organisation as well as the delivery of outreach provision. However, '... if some sections don't see the need to have outreach as part of their long-term strategy, then those sections are never going to have the will to have effective outreach teaching'. Institutional support from senior management will be provided as and when it is identified and requested by sections. As the Principal put it, 'I pull together the wills of the sections'.

The Director of College Development (Vice-Principal) had a related view of outreach as 'a sort of "sharp-edge" way of reaching a whole range of people that we haven't reached before', and as an 'interface' between the college and the community. Its importance lay not simply in attracting greater numbers to FE but in demonstrating in community settings 'the quality that we offer and the overall college role, and so I think it's crucial, absolutely crucial, in that area'. In terms of college development, outreach will become more important as the 16- to 19-year-old cohort declines, and this, the Director felt, will necessitate more resources to develop outreach work, above those required for its actual delivery. In view of this, what the Director feels is needed over the next couple of years is that outreach work and its requirements be accurately quantified in terms of setting-up and delivery costs, travel, materials, as well as actual student numbers, 'so that there's a firm base of knowledge on which formal decisions can be made, rather than just gut reaction.' Although the Director of Development has assumed this role only recently, a strongly positive attitude to outreach was evident, together with ideas for its further development and formal inclusion as part of ongoing college provision. 'What I

shall be doing and what the college shall be doing is issuing a statement about the college's forward development and outreach would be a very important element of that.'

In the initial round of interviews with heads of department, one of the major problems for outreach was that departmental heads considered this provision as fairly marginal in relation to other priorities, and this was explained in terms of departmental funding arrangements. The move away from a head of department system to a matrix of college sections was accompanied by the introduction of a new financial model of resource allocation. This parallel development allocates resources within colleges not on the basis of a 'star-chamber' scramble to secure funds based on argument or perceived need but on the actual numbers and types of students any section has, irrespective of whether enrolments are outreach or main-site. Thus a student taking an electronics course on outreach will attract to that section the same funding as a similar student doing the same course in college. As the Director of Resources put it, 'money is allocated to sections on the basis of all the students they have, including outreach students'. This model would seem to imply that section leaders have at least the same financial incentive to organise outreach provision as they would college-based courses from their section. This funding arrangement might not in itself prevent the marginalisation of outreach provision, but it would seem likely to militate against the constraints which were perceived by heads of department. Although it is still too early to determine accurately, indications suggest that section leaders and staff in sections are likely to support outreach with the necessary funding the more they are able to identify the financial contribution that this work makes to their sectional budgets. For all the outreach modules piloted at Cleveland Technical College and those scheduled for September 1988, the research worker had outreach students indicated as such on enrolment forms. This enables sections to distinguish and quantify outreach students, and helps staff to establish future trends.

Cross-college provision, curriculum development and staff development

Outreach work cannot be the responsibility of any single section, department or other identified cluster of college provision because it potentially embraces the whole of the college curriculum; indeed, outreach work may identify new areas of need hitherto unrecognised. Outreach provision, then, has a cross-college dimension and thus calls for a cross-college response to its organisation and delivery. The cross-college Director had not considered this wider implication of outreach, although the suggestion was made during the interview that a cross-college section could be established to co-ordinate a college response to outreach needs. It was pointed out by the research worker that this might have a negative effect in that it could take away from sections any sense of control, initiation and responsibility for outreach work, and thus remove any incentive to incorporate outreach as part of a section's natural provision. Another suggestion was the compilation of a supplementary outreach brochure incorporating various courses with routes to progression to college and based on the project's research.

The importance of an institution's curriculum development activities for outreach should focus on the gradual modularisation of key areas of education and training. Chapter 3 pointed to the need for modularisation within college if routes to progression for outreach students were to be complementary to outreach courses, and for such routes to be kept open throughout the year. This issue was put to the Director of Curriculum Development in interview. The response was that modularisation should be encouraged:

- to enable outreach students to progress to college to continue their chosen studies without having to repeat large areas of a course, or having to wait months before the next logical stage is offered;
- to enable outreach students to work at their own pace and in their own time through individually negotiated blocks of learning materials towards a predetermined goal.

Although these points had outreach students as their focus, they have a wider relevance and advantages for all unemployed adults. However, at the time of writing, little had been initiated at senior management level in the area of modularisation. Plans were being developed, though largely as a result of external pressures from agencies such as the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ). Has the outreach project in any way been a stimulus to modularisation? 'Yes I think so, because the people who have been involved were actually asked to set something up themselves and it's worked. Lots of other staff have seen this work and I think it's given other people the confidence to see that it's not going to fall flat on its face. It can work, we can develop things of their own.' This comment endorses the impression gained by the research worker after talking to different members of the teaching staff — that lecturers unconnected with outreach are now thinking about the issue of modularisation from their observations on the experience of the project. If this interest is further encouraged by senior management it can only have a positive effect in the future for modularisation within the college.

The Director of Staff and Student Affairs has responsibility for staff development throughout the college. A perception of outreach-related staff development needs was offered by the Director in the context of a college-wide programme for the professional development of staff. The skills and abilities required for effective outreach organisation and delivery were seen as being relevant for college-based activities also. 'We need to be able to look at a staff development programme which will help us develop all staff to be able to cope not only with outreach but a wide range of curriculum development activities.' From this it would seem that staff need to be able to identify needs, to provide students with a variety of learning opportunities, to provide guidance and counselling from pre-course to post-course and to be able to evaluate the programme. Similarly, teaching and learning strategies in relation to equality between staff and students, negotiation and progression are all issues which have relevance throughout the college curriculum. 'What I envisage is a programme of staff development covering those aspects you

mentioned and more, of which outreach is a part, but not exclusively designed for outreach.' As a result of this interview the research worker designed an outreach staff development programme as part of the Director's college-wide programme, to take place at the end of the summer term.

Summary of second round interviews

When compared to the first round of interviews with heads of department in the early stages of the project, this second phase of monitoring of the attitudes of senior college management, undertaken many months later and after substantive parts of the project's action plan had been implemented, shows a marked increase in awareness of the aims and objectives of outreach. It also indicates a recognition by all members of this stratum of the importance of their roles in strengthening the overall quality of outreach provision and planning for its further development. Perhaps the most significant point to emerge from these interviews is that outreach was seen as an integral part of the college curriculum; from college development through to staff development, outreach was recognised as a constituent part of a wider whole. This concensus can only be positive. If outreach was interpreted in exclusive terms, not only would modularisation and progression be stunted but the future for outreach could lead towards marginalisation at one extreme or high-profile glamorisation at the other. Neither would be acceptable. So how might this increasingly positive view of outreach be explained?

The change in the administrative structure of the college removed the traditional head of department system, and with it some of the constraints heads felt themselves to be under. With the matrix system, senior personnel were freed from detailed managerial roles and assumed specific functions, or themes, on a college-wide basis. Aspects of outreach were seen to have direct relevance to the new responsibilities of directors and no director would be left in sole charge of its eventual fate.

The second round of interviews took place well into the life of the project, after extensive needs analysis had been completed. Three of the outreach modules had been piloted and their preliminary evaluations had been written up. All members of senior management, including the Principal and Vice-Principal, had been kept fully informed as to the progress of the project via briefing papers, reports and informal discussions in college. This process of communication and information dissemination undoubtedly helped to develop and strengthen a commitment to outreach as it obviously did their understanding of the project.

It is difficult to judge with certainty which of the two has had the strongest influence on college management, and it may be a balance of the two. Not all colleges have a matrix system, and not all matrix systems are identical to that employed by Cleveland Technical College. However, this should not prevent other colleges, either with matrix or traditional structures, from developing outreach provision. It is felt that the key point is to secure as far as possible the commitment of college management, however the college is organised. This can best be achieved by a sustained process of communication leading to the active

inclusion of management in the planning, development and co-ordination of outreach work. It is in itself a crucial staff development strategy. At Cleveland Technical College, institutional support for outreach has been slow to develop, hesitant and as yet not fully co-ordinated, but the process seems to be firmly under way.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN OUTREACH TEACHING

Outreach staff development work becomes particularly important since outreach places new responsibilities and pressures on the staff delivering the provision. Staff who are used to a college teaching situation will experience problems on outreach associated with the unfamiliar surroundings of a non-teaching environment. There may be few, if any, of the support systems to be found in college such as reprographic and audio-visual equipment. Nor will it be common to find flip-charts, overhead projectors or chalkboards in the local learning centre which the target group of potential students might use. Staff development in the context of outreach teaching should take the form of any activity which enables the tutor to respond effectively to both the educational needs of students within the learning process and the limitations and constraints imposed by the learning environment.

Examples of physical, organisational and resource constraints are given below and are taken from the outreach modules which were piloted during the project. All modules experienced problems in this respect and were tackled by the outreach tutors in individual ways and in an *ad hoc* manner. To a large extent these constraints were overcome, and this reflects the initiative of the staff concerned. The following extracts, gained in interviews with different outreach tutors on modules delivered at different local learning centres, illustrate various constraints which may not on the surface appear to be major obstacles but which can weaken the quality of delivery.

Electronics: skelton impasse

'The initial location was the badminton hall which was used for kiddies' morning or something like that. You could tell by the sweet papers and the mess on the tables. I had one or two cold days and I thought, "Well, no students can sit down and work comfortable in that environment" and also the hall was very echoey and I found that I didn't need for the size of group that size of room, so I made enquiries about the snooker room. It was carpeted out and a lot warmer and had heating in there. The main niggle with me was that here the tables never stayed in that room, so you always had to organise the tables before you got there, and the other thing was when you got the tables they were usually messed up and covered with fag ash and tea stains. It was the tea stains that were really annoying; you're trying to get students to do written work in some cases, and you can't do it on a dirty desk, so I started carrying round a cloth to wipe these tops down, really for the students' own comfort.'

'Every time I came, I had to get the keys and get the equipment out of the dark room where it was locked up and set up the tables. You've always got that worry: have I got enough equipment? I took two suitcases out originally for tasters, full of different items. Then once we had negotiated the course, I got rid of one suitcase and re-packed the other one to cover for the sort of beginning of the 726 City and Guilds.'

Pottery

The pottery course experienced ongoing problems concerning the small and narrow physical layout of the teaching area set aside by the school and other facilities, notably a kiln which did not have a thermostatic control. It might seem surprising that there would be such problems at this venue since the course was delivered in a large educational establishment. For this reason, the course tutor compiled a week-by-week account describing some of the difficulties encountered in the first half of the course. These included: unstable tables; the unexpected presence of decorators, necessitating a change of room; a lack of storage space; a limited choice of glazes compared to the college; a lack of books, photographs and video facilities. However, the tutor overcame the worst of these constraints by seeking and securing help from the Head of Art at the school, who gave support in a caretaking capacity between sessions and supervised the operation of the kiln.

Problems of administration

All the outreach tutors reported problems in enrolment procedures which were those of the college and implemented in the same way. However, on outreach the tutors did not have the benefit of college administrative support and consequently many minor and annoying faults in completing enrolment forms dogged the course tutors, often for several weeks, as forms were shunted to and from college before various administrative requirements had been met. Perhaps a simplified enrolment procedure for outreach courses should be established, either by designing a more accessible form or by providing outreach administrative support to course tutors when they enrol their students at the first session, as was the suggestion from one exasperated tutor:

'The only big hassle has been filling in enrolment forms and getting them back again because something's been missing off it. It would be nice to have someone there for the initial enrolling, someone from the admin staff. I object to all that paperwork. I bitterly resent doing that; my role is to teach not fill in bloody forms. Students in college are prepared to fill in forms but students coming to Grangetown are coming to do sports, they don't think they should be filling in forms. Out there I feel that it is intrusive; I don't think we need it.' (Course tutor, CSLA.)

Problems of identifying and responding to new needs

During the lengthy process of investigating and assessing community-based adult educational needs, the research worker made contact and maintained communication with a wide variety

and number of groups and organisations from h statutory and voluntary sectors, based in the various commu s which make up East Cleveland. One such set of contacts w ne training centres for mentally handicapped adults togeth ith a number of supervised residential homes in the area. O the aims of such facilities is to develop social and interacti ills which might enable the individual to integrate more effectively into the life of the local community and to feel part of it. The outreach project worker held discussions with officers and care supervisors. The aim was to explore ways of successfully integrating small numbers of mentally handicapped adults into outreach courses. The result was that two people joined a group of eleven unemployed adults at the start of the outreach electronics/domestic electrics course.

This FE course was not designed with special needs students in mind. The course was more relevant to unemployed/unwaged adults, who comprised the bulk of the student group. In particular, it aimed at developing basic skills associated with electronic circuits, testing and fault-finding in domestic appliances and so on, which would enable students to progress comfortably to the City and Guilds 726 certificate. The tutor had therefore planned and organised the framework of the course with the students around the associated aims of technical skills development and vocational progression. The mentally handicapped students did not figure in this design, since it would be unlikely that they could approach even a minimum proficiency in these skills, let alone progression to the City and Guilds course. The demands on any tutor with a mixed-ability group are considerable, but with this course the polarisation of abilities was acute.

The course tutor responded instinctively to the professional demands placed upon him by the challenge from this new type of client. This response, although hesitant and unsure to begin with, worked well in that the tutor's personal qualities of sensitivity, friendliness and humour created an atmosphere conducive to confidence-building and subsequent skills development. Yet little staff development work took place prior to the start of the course which might have identified the most appropriate teaching strategy, and with hindsight this was a shortcoming. Had a less-committed or less-perceptive tutor been responsible, the outcome might have been very different. As it happened, the importance of delivery which recognises the centrality of sequential learning processes was understood and acted upon. As the tutor put it:

> '... you had to put yourself back at the beginning, as though you had never used a screw-driver, and then think through all the stages which are involved in using it. Then you had to separate these stages, order them and teach them one at a time until each is mastered. Only then have you taught a skill which you take for granted and everyone else does without thinking about it.'

Teaching mentally handicapped adults was an entirely new area of work for the tutor. How did he feel about this experience and how was it assessed from a personal and professional position?

'I gained a clear insight into my patience and what I do know. You take for granted hand skills because you can do them yourself, but when you're trying to teach somebody else to do the same thing, you've got to really think through in stages what you do automatically with your hands. And then you've got to start being very clever and think which hand is the better hand of this person and you've got to find out, give them exercises or develop other ways to find out.'

And what was his view of the two mentally handicapped students?

'Well, I think they got a lot of personal development out of it. They used to see me in the street, and greet me in the street which I don't think they would do normally. They're very introvert sort of people, they tend not to come out of themselves, though after a while they would complain jokingly if I appeared to be late, or if I gave them the wrong plug, if I'd mixed their plugs up with something else or I'd got the gear wrong. They started to come out of themselves very much.'

(The transcript of a post-course interview with one of the two mentally handicapped students and further discussion of possible responses by FE to the mentally handicapped client group are presented in Appendix D.)

Summary

Some of the problems associated with the use of out-centres for the delivery of education and training to adults have been described in this chapter. Possible solutions to such constraints include:

- the initiatives and organising abilities of outreach tutors to solve many of the problems which arise in non-conventional teaching settings; this implies the need for suitable teaching staff to undertake outreach work;
- the identification and utilisation of all possible localised resources within the centre for teaching purposes;
- securing support from the 'managers' of out-centres to maintain the teaching environment between sessions and, where necessary, provide other logistical support.

THE STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

At the end of the 1988 summer term an outreach staff development programme was implemented in the college with the collaboration of the Director responsible. It is offered here as a possible model for colleges to communicate to all staff at all levels the rationale and aims of outreach (see Figure 2). This programme should lead to the establishment of a college-wide outreach tutor group.

Towards the end of the project the research worker gave a presentation to the three tiers of college personnel indicated in the staff development model. This was followed by a series of four sessions on various issues which have featured prominently in the action research. At the end of this programme an outreach tutor group was established which brought together the staff with

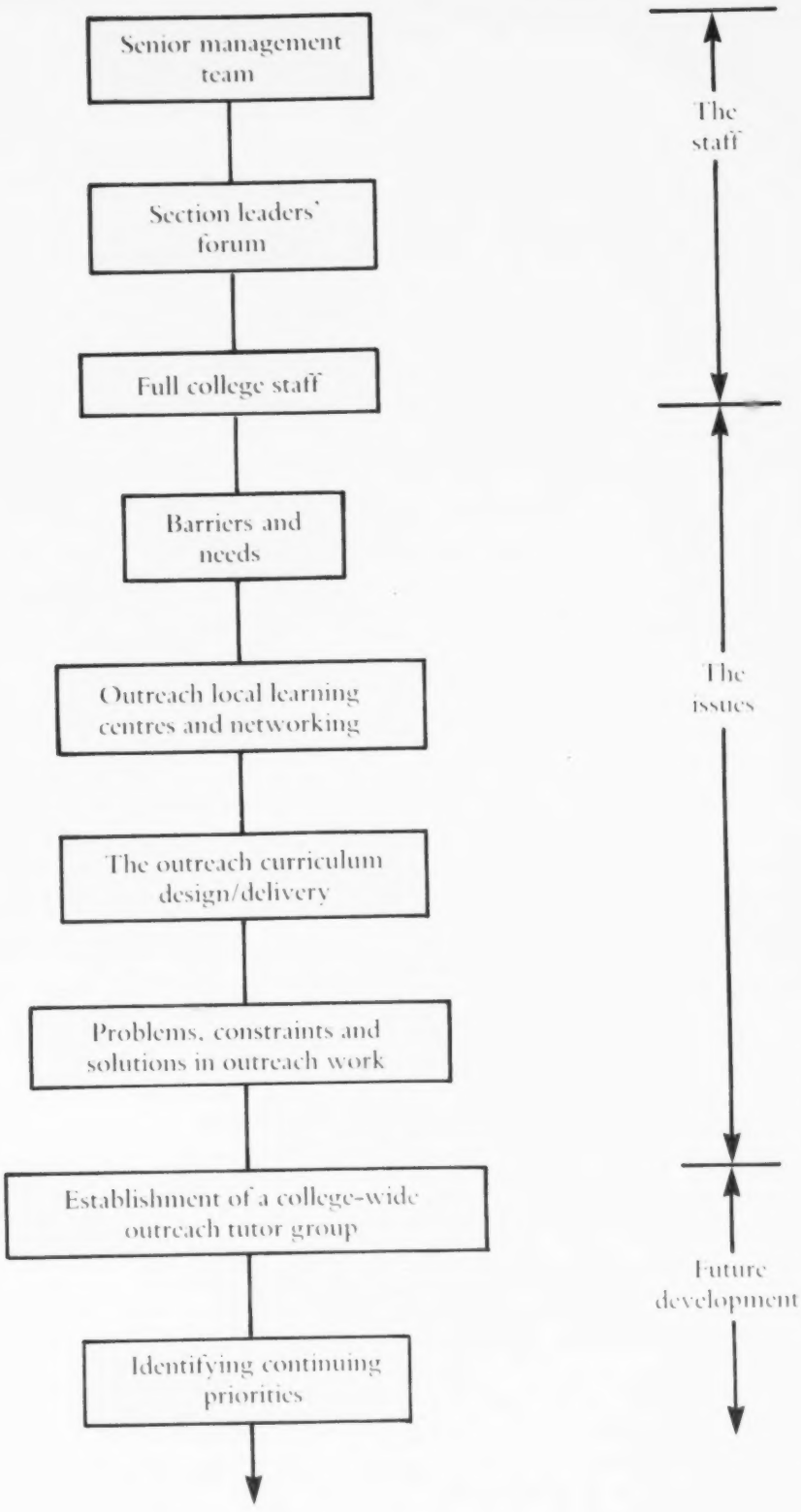

Figure 2: Structure of college — outreach staff development programme

experience of outreach teaching and others — full-time and part-time staff but also some who had successfully completed the City and Guilds 730 course at the college who had become interested in this type of work during the life of the project and after the staff development activities. This group will continue to function as a mutual support team by meeting to exchange information, share their experiences, identify problems and discuss possible solutions.

Institutional support and staff development are the means by which outreach tutors are able to perform their task effectively and confidently. The detailed content of staff development programmes will differ between institutions as well as between different areas to reflect local characteristics. However, they should contain certain aims. These are:

- to encourage staff to exercise responsibility for the overall management and teaching within the local learning centre;
- to encourage staff to know and be known by the local community in which they work, by becoming familiar with local groups which use the outreach centre and by participating in any local network of providers of activities/services for unwaged adults;
- to understand the needs of the target group of unwaged adults who traditionally do not participate in FE by exploring and appreciating the perspective of the unwaged;
- to develop the abilities and skills of staff in order to incorporate specific outreach design features into their courses;
- to train staff to evaluate their courses;
- to recognise new needs identified by work in local communities and to be able to give an effective response;
- to encourage staff to identify and utilise local resources.

6. COLLEGE TO COMMUNITY

The previous chapter had as its focus a discussion on the extent of institutional support necessary for the effective organisation of outreach provision, together with a continuing staff development strategy necessary for the efficient delivery of outreach modules. This chapter takes as its central point of discussion the role of the institution in its relationship with the local community and argues that outreach should not be seen simply as an external dimension of college provision largely disconnected from other community-based activities. Rather, this relationship should be seen more in the context of the college responding to the educational needs of unwaged adults identified and articulated by individuals, groups and organisations within the community itself. The outreach project began with a perception of the college investigating ways to make its provision more accessible by local delivery in out-centres. However, during the project this perception changed towards an interpretation of outreach as something that is based more within the life of the local community and which should be seen as an integral part of a wider collaborative attempt to meet adult educational needs. This shift was given concrete form in the final outreach course — a photography course for mentally handicapped adults — which was an outcome of interagency co-operation: this course is described later in this chapter.

INITIATING OUTREACH WORK

The first and most daunting task for any college about to undertake outreach work is the essential prerequisite of getting to know and be known by the local community. This may seem a paradox since FE institutions exist to serve the adult educational needs within a given area. However, for most colleges — and those within Cleveland are no exception — their response has traditionally been to offer a range of provision without direct and systematic linkages to the local community. Nor is it common for staff in colleges — senior staff or lecturers — as part of their professional responsibilities to engage in such activities in a coherent manner.

At the outset of the project, the research worker set out to establish initial contact with the myriad of groups and local agencies around East Cleveland with the purpose of explaining the project; but, more importantly, to understand the nature and extent of community-based activities both on a district level and at the village level. Initial contact with groups developed into a strategy of sustained communication:

- regular visits to individuals and groups out in the community;
- outreach presentations to audiences attending community events organised by the voluntary sector;
- outreach presentations at forums and conferences on issues such as community development, attended by representatives of county and district authorities;
- membership of the management committees of various community organisations;

- compilation of a mailing list based on the contacts made;
- a direct-line telephone installed by the college in the research project office.

This process of establishing links between the college and the local community is exacting in the amount of development time taken up by visits, and in understanding how the different pieces of the local jigsaw of community activities and services fit together, or in some cases are duplicated unnecessarily. Chapter 4 described how teaching venues were identified and agreed upon by the project and the management committees responsible for those venues. A major point here was the time-consuming effort which went into this part of the project. The process of maintaining communication with groups outside the college similarly demanded the attention of the research worker throughout the life of the project and continues at the time of writing. This should not be surprising. The investment of outreach development work was time taken to establish the college as a community resource; to ease the acceptance of outreach as not just complementary to, but part of, a wider set of community-based opportunities for local unwaged adults; and to gain endorsement for the outreach modules which were subsequently piloted. The return on this investment has been to benefit from a wide range of enquiries, suggestions and demands from groups and community facilities for different types of provision based on needs identified by these local agencies. All were followed up by the research worker towards the end of the project and many were further developed, with ten being offered on outreach for the 1988-9 academic year. It is difficult to quantify such development work, but it is not unreasonable to suggest that the greater part of the life of the project was spent in this way.

Development work of this type needs to be viewed not as inconsequential to the delivery of provision but as part of the whole process of responding to adult educational needs. The outreach project has demonstrated the value of this type of provision, but it has also pointed up the need for a continued dialogue between providers — in this case a college of FE — and the community. This relationship has to receive further funding if the momentum is not to wane. Colleges need to set aside remission hours for teaching staff to take an active part in the communities they are to serve, while LEAs need to give priority to supporting outreach development work which underpins the success of actual delivery. Moreover, educational outreach should not be seen in narrow terms, but in the wider context of community development. The notion that outreach work from colleges complements other community activities and generally contributes to the regeneration and vitality of local communities, and therefore to the quality of life of disadvantaged adults, also implies the need for involvement by the local district authority. Joint funding possibilities which include funding support by district authorities for outreach community development work should therefore be encouraged. The extent and length of support necessary for outreach development workers to be effective in the local community will be based on the needs of different areas and will in any case be subject to negotiation. However, the

experience of this project suggests that a three-year cycle of funding support is necessary to initially assess the efficacy of this type of community development work. The life of the FEU project was only half of this proposed cycle, and although its results are very encouraging the project nevertheless points to the need for sustained work to strengthen and build upon these foundations. Other research has also indicated the imperative of effective support for outreach development work:

> 'Outreach work is not just a sympathetic, locally-based form of recruitment. To move beyond this it must involve getting to know a local neighbourhood; engaging unwaged (and other) adults in ongoing dialogue about needs, education and resources; and developing credibility for the outreach worker as to how he or she can be of assistance in identifying and facilitating a way forward for local (unwaged) people. To do this an outreach worker above all needs time but must also have access to information and resources, wider network contacts and personal support, particularly in the initial period of reaching out.' (*Exploring the Educational Needs of Unwaged Adults* REPLAN/ NIACE, 1987, p.58.)

The experience of the outreach project has highlighted the value of these 'wider network contacts' for easing the acceptance of the need to give support for FE outreach initiatives, and in strengthening the image of the college as being responsive to community-based needs. This network has been important in four general areas:

- identifying and assessing the educational needs in the community of unwaged adults;
- establishing relations of trust and co-operation between the college and the community;
- recognising the strengths and roles played by other groups and agencies in provision for the unwaged;
- developing a framework for future collaboration to pool resources and expertise in establishing outreach provision.

IDENTIFYING COMMUNITY-BASED NEEDS

During the needs-analysis phase of the project, the worker sought to undertake group discussion sessions with representative samples of unwaged adults, in order to add a qualitative component to this research. Chapter 2 documents and describes these interviews with a women's self-help group, some younger unemployed people and a number of older unemployed adults. Each of the three sets of respondents was contacted through the project worker's involvement on a district basis with local groups. The women's group itself was part of a network, while the other two were reached directly or indirectly, by this approach of tapping into and utilising the experience and expertise of existing community organisations. Without the effort and support of local groups, it is not certain that the project would have succeeded in forming at least two of the participant groups whose members had little or no previous contact with the FE system and who, therefore, remained beyond the reach of traditional forms of provision. However, it is not the case that

local groups are to be used as convenient mechanisms for college initiatives. In the case of this research, local groups felt able to endorse the project to the unemployed, who, because of this recommendation, acknowledged its credibility. The subsequent interviews in local settings allowed an openness in the participants which might not have been forthcoming had the project attempted qualitative research from within the institution and without the collaboration of community groups. It is felt, therefore, that local community-based groups can offer the strongest pulse for any institution attempting to identify and assess community adult educational needs.

ESTABLISHING TRUST AND CO-OPERATION

It is an important principle in outreach work that colleges establish co-operative links with other providers of services, especially educational ones, who are working in the same geographic area. Many providers have long histories of educational involvement in local communities which may be formally established, as with AE and the WEA, or informally organised by voluntary associations, who nevertheless contribute equally to local AE activities. Colleges, by contrast, have little experience of community education outside the institution, and it is understandable that college outreach initiatives might be seen to some extent to be trespassing. Contact and communication between the college and the various other providers becomes important if suspicion and distrust are to be overcome and fears of territorial encroachment are to be allayed. This the project attempted by networking, though the experience suggests trust and co-operation are more a long-term aim rather than an immediately realisable goal. One AE organiser told the research worker, 'You are treading on my toes'. A local worker for a national charity operating a community-based resource centre in a severely deprived area refused the college its crèche facility for outreach purposes commenting, 'I don't see any reason for the voluntary sector to underwrite the statutory sector'. These comments tended to reflect a wider sense of unease within some sections of community-based groups, especially in the early stages of the project. As the project developed, and the college via the research worker became more identified with community development work, many such fears were assuaged. Indeed, towards the end of the project the community worker from the voluntary sector, who had earlier denied crèche facilities to the college, became involved with the research worker in planning and organising a New Opportunities for Women course aimed at the substantial proportion of lone parents on a large council estate. The course is to be held at the resource centre and will include provision for a crèche. Although it would be premature to conclude that perceptions of imperialist tendencies from the college have been fully dissipated, the sustained community contact by the project, through visits, meetings and network forums, has ameliorated many such fears. More effort in the future — and, by implication, more development time — is necessary to avoid conflict and to establish relationships of mutual trust and co-operation.

RECOGNISING THE ROLE PLAYED BY OTHER PROVIDERS

FE outreach initiatives should recognise the role played by other agencies, voluntary and statutory, in provision for the unemployed. It is not always the case that the college does it better, and this is especially so in the context of community-based AE. Formal and informal learning activities in local communities have for many years been well established and, in any case, often reflect a curriculum which colleges do not embrace. A wide range of recreational and leisure opportunities exist together with a plethora of informal provision organised by a wide variety of voluntary or self-help groups, reflecting a localised and idiosyncratic demand. The outreach college should recognise the strengths of *ad hoc* initiatives in generating self-help within local communities and see them as being of equal value to the learner as FE opportunities. Such recognition also involves a readiness by the college to support informal learning activities as and when the participants feel ready to progress to further develop skills or add new ones. Thus, the informal knitting circle which has developed ambitions towards setting up a small business might need the appropriate college help, while a residents' group engaged in improving their properties might need the expertise of the college to competently and safely rewire their homes.

COLLABORATION AND SHARING OF RESOURCES

Collaboration and sharing of resources for a given and commonly agreed upon aim — that of maximising the quality and efficiency of provision — should be seen as a long-term strategy. In the course of the project, examples of collaboration and sharing of resources can be given as evidence of joint action. The minibus from the Impasse Centre was used to transport equipment and the lecturer for the electronics course; sports equipment belonging to the Boys' Club was used each week for the CSLA; the Youth and Community Centre video contributed to the Access course; and the headteacher of the school organised staff in a supporting role for the outreach pottery course. Nor is this a one-way process benefiting only the college. Towards the end of the college year, a need for typewriting provision was identified in different areas of East Cleveland. The college responded by offering 20 machines for community use to be kept in identified local learning centres. These resources are now used by very small groups of learners on an informal basis under the supervision of local volunteers. The small numbers of people involved at any time, and the variable times of the day that learners are able to go to the local learning centres to use the machines, preclude a college-organised outreach course being established. However, in sharing some of its resources with the community, the college is signalling its commitment to community-based education in a general sense, is further raising its profile as a community resource and is establishing a sounder base for future outreach collaboration possibilities.

NETWORKS

The success of a community-led approach to outreach will hinge on the ability to effect interagency co-operation and collaboration, and this is best achieved through networking. In

the County of Cleveland, networks exist in each of the four district administrative areas. Langbaurgh in East Cleveland is the one which the project was involved with. This network predates the outreach project, and its initiation and development along with the other three owe much to the work of the then ESG County Development Officer for provision for the unemployed. The outreach project tapped into this network as part of its strategy of working with and through community groups. The network has subsequently developed more localised LINK groups based on smaller geographic areas which can address the various and specific problems and needs of particular communities. The college has been involved with the district-level network, though the outreach project tended to work more closely with the LINK groups because it has become apparent that, while the unemployed share certain characteristics of need, at a localised level other needs emerge which differ from place to place and are associated with geography, relative levels of deprivation, extent of existing services and the legacy of economic decline. Towards the end of the project, the researcher, along with a local community worker, began to develop a core group of specialist agencies — educational or directly supportive organisations — with the eventual aim of planning and co-ordinating local provision for the unemployed. Similar developments are planned for other local areas within the district along lines indicated in Figure 3.

The functions and purposes of networking arrangements and co-operation and collaboration between different agencies, for the purposes of outreach provision, should include most or all of the following:

- information;
- sharing of experience;
- avoidance of duplication;
- avoidance of competition;
- recognition of strengths and weaknesses;
- identification of gaps in provision and working to address unmet needs;
- identification of new needs as they develop;
- sharing of resources;
- co-ordination of joint publicity;
- mapping of possible entry points;
- identification of routes to progression and encouragement of referral of clients;
- incorporation of education guidance and advice.

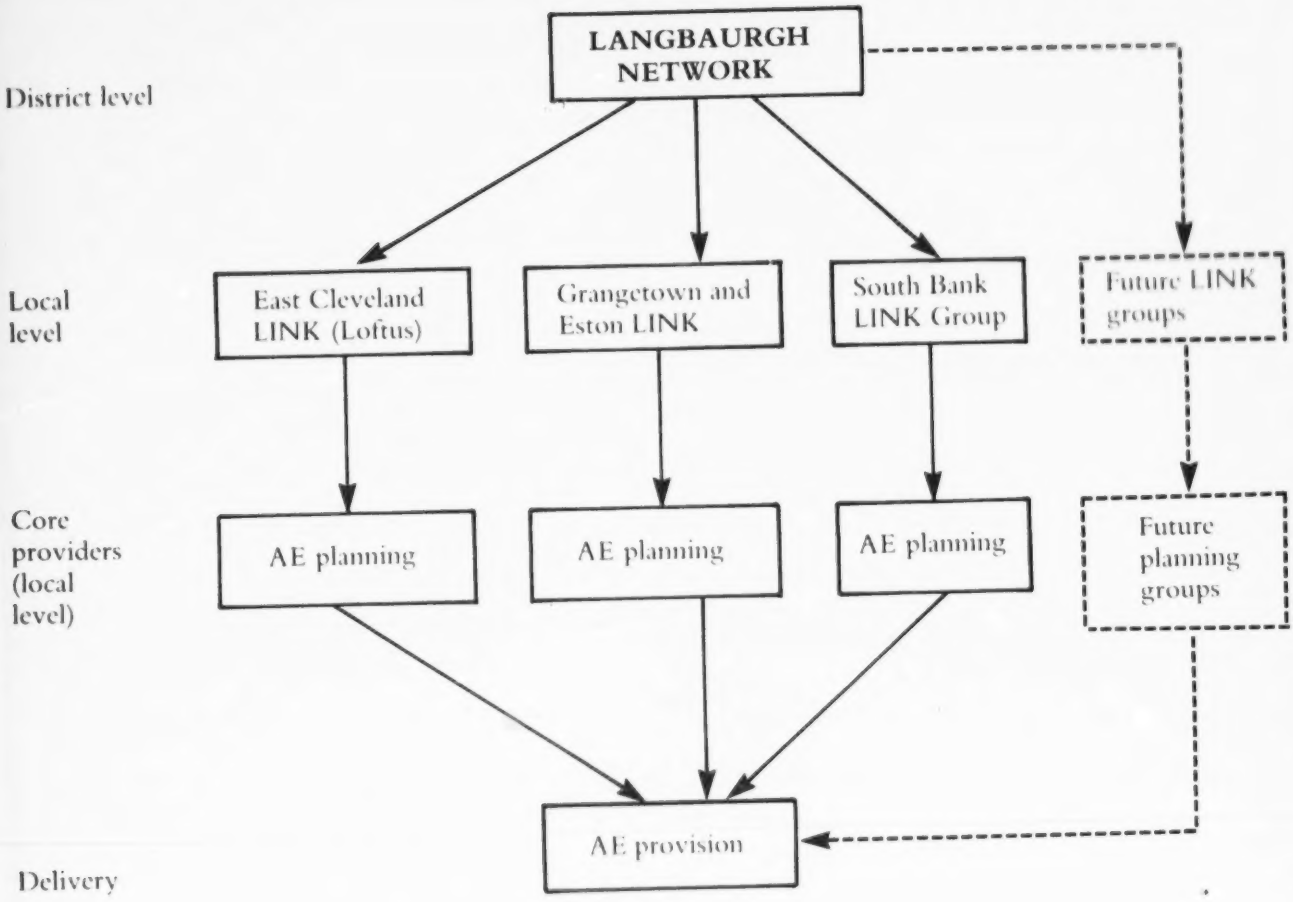

Figure 3: Outreach networking: A district and local structure

Although networks are becoming increasingly evident nationally, not all areas have them. This should not prevent colleges from developing outreach activities, however (see Appendix E). A college can start to establish a networking strategy by targeting specific locations in its catchment area and then working to bring together a group of core providers including identified outreach 'teaching venues'. The process can equally start from a local or neighbourhood level, and this strategy could produce immediate results in terms of implementing courses. A local LINK forum could then develop out of a functioning community-based outreach AE planning group. The question of resourcing networks, whatever their structure and organisational form, needs to be addressed. The most suitable funding agency is the body which retains responsibility for AE — the LEA — but funding agencies should also include the district authority for the area in which the network is to function.

Networks have traditionally been concerned with the organisation and dissemination of information on educational opportunities. Through interagency co-operation in exchanging

such information, and through attending forums for the discussion of problems, constraints and each other's experiences, a more coherent — and more accessible — service can be offered to the unemployed. A community-led perspective on outreach would agree with this, but would also go further. It would envisage a collaborative environment within which core groups and supporting organisations within one network actively collaborate in order to place, organise and deliver the service, jointly contributing expertise and resources to enable provision to take place. Without such collaborative relationships, the outreach photography course, for example, would not, and could not, have taken place.

TOWARDS A COMMUNITY-LED PERSPECTIVE ON OUTREACH PROVISION

The direct participation of the college in networking via the research project took place along the lines indicated above. This experience moved the project away from a college- or provider-led perception of outreach to a more community-led or participatory interpretation of how outreach initiatives might best be organised. Thus, provision would reflect a community-based identification of need with a collaborative response in addressing such need. At the heart of this perspective lies the assertion that the college should respond positively to demands made upon it for outreach provision by the local community. According to this view, groups of individuals, organisations and agencies are able to identify and articulate local needs, which may be their own or those which have become evident from their working with or providing services for local unemployed adults. And because of their local positioning, these groupings are quite literally better placed to identify people with need and to anticipate future priorities for action more accurately than might the college. The college should then respond by a member of its staff, with responsibility for outreach, discussing with all the relevant and interested local agencies, aspects of an effective response including the planning, organisation, resourcing and delivery. This perspective then becomes characterised by participation and interagency collaboration.

THE PHOTOGRAPHY COURSE

The fifth and final outreach course piloted during the project provides a concrete example of how this community-led view of outreach can work. Some months before the end of the project the worker was contacted by a county community worker who was working on a local mini-project which was similarly looking into needs assessments in Grangetown and South Bank — severely deprived areas of Langbaurgh district with unemployment exceeding 40%. This worker was familiar with the outreach project through its involvement with the South Bank LINK local network. A new area had been identified in mentally handicapped adults who daily attended a local adult training centre where it was felt more efforts should be made to have its clients attempt some kind of social integration through local activities outside the adult training centre itself. The outreach worker then set up a series of planning meetings with five local agencies, which resulted in an outreach special needs photography course being piloted for these clients and other mentally handicapped adults from the surrounding district.

Through a process of community participation and inter-agency collaboration, need had been identified and addressed. Moreover, it is not simply that this course would not have happened without community participation, but equally it could not have happened without the collaboration between different agencies, notably in the area of resources. The college had been alerted by the community worker, discussions were then held with the adult training centre, and the outreach research worker contacted the nearby Grangetown Opportunities Centre — previously identified as a suitable local teaching venue. This centre contributed resources to the course as well as welcoming it to its premises. The resources included cameras, lighting, screens, dark-room and enlarger. The college provided software such as chemicals, film and paper, and also employed as lecturer for the course a volunteer tutor from the centre itself. The course was, and remains, successful in every aspect. Needs had been identified by the community, which had also been involved in its planning, resourcing and delivery, and the outreach project provided the organising catalyst bringing together different local groups with college support. The students gained personal skills in walking the quarter mile to the centre, through traffic, roundabouts and lights, together with manipulative skills from basic (that is, pinhole) photography. Their helpers from the adult training centre commented on a general rise in self-confidence. The course has not yet been formally evaluated since it continued through the summer, though early indications suggest its outcomes are similar to those in the case study, 'Monday was Joe's Day' (Appendix D).

IDENTIFYING AND RESPONDING TO NEEDS

One of the main aims of outreach is to increase the take-up of further educational opportunities by largely unemployed adults who are traditional non-participants in FE. Many among this client group exist in conditions of social isolation, suffer from low levels of self-esteem and, because of factors such as these, are reluctant to take advantage of learning opportunities or see little point in doing so. This primary target group for outreach tends to remain beyond the reach of, and invisible to, most forms of FE marketing. If marketing is about matching provision with needs, a mechanism is required which will help colleges to identify and respond to those needs. Figure 4 summarises one possibility.

Local agencies from both the statutory and voluntary sectors constitute a major element in community-based activities and services which are delivered to people locally. Professionals from statutory agencies such as social services, youth and community and the library service are in daily contact with the primary clients for outreach initiatives. Many local groups and organisations from the voluntary sector are also involved in activities with the unemployed. Since the composition of many groups is drawn from the locality in which they operate, their members are likely to have friends, family and other social contacts who are unwaged. Agencies from the statutory and voluntary sector, therefore, can help colleges by providing vital information which is both comprehensive and accurate about local problems, needs and how to address them. They can be

seen to provide an organic link for the college into the community. This framework, by which needs may be identified and addressed, is further developed by the role of a college outreach co-ordinator, liaising with community-based organisations (and in a networking arrangement with them) who has the function of organising from within college the relevant delivery systems, including staffing and resources. This framework is necessarily a broad outline since more detailed criteria will emerge from its actual operation, and will, anyway, reflect different local characteristics. The point here is to emphasise the important contribution local groups and localised agencies can play in helping colleges market their outreach provision to the adult unemployed.

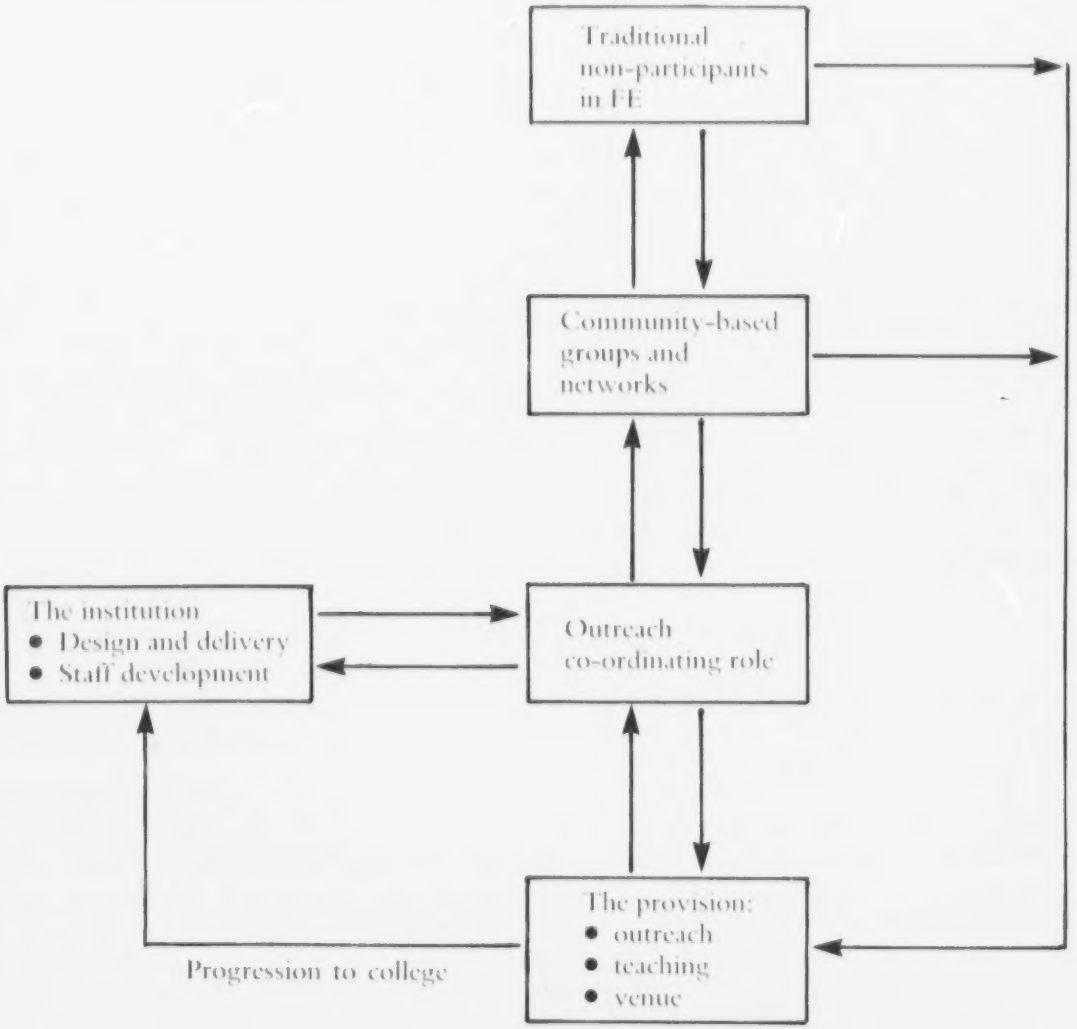

Figure 4: A possible mechanism for a college to identify and respond to the educational needs of traditional non-participants in FE

The first and substantive group of outreach modules piloted in the project corresponded more to a provider-led approach to outreach, at least in how they were identified if not in how they were organised and delivered. These modules were chosen partly because of their success in college and, from a college view, their relevance to unemployed mature students. This was both necessary and desirable at a time in the project when community linkage had not been adequately established. And in making such linkages it was important for the project to gain credibility from the community by being seen to be doing something. A 'legitimacy by results' emerged which further established the college as a community resource and gave encouragement to people and agencies out in the various local communities to become more actively involved in dialogue with the college. The shift in the project's perception of outreach as provider-led towards a community-led approach came about as a result of this increased dialogue and culminated in the photography course for the mentally handicapped. The experience of this project would suggest that colleges will necessarily adopt the provider-led approach, especially in areas where outreach work is minimal or non-existent. However, colleges should be alert to the importance of moving towards the community-led perspective as outreach develops and when college/community links become forged. To remain within a provider-led notion of outreach is to adopt a narrow, indeed colonial, approach, largely unconnected with and distant from the life of the local community which the college is meant to serve. To move beyond this approach towards a participatory or community-led perspective is to enable groups and local people to become 'involved in attending and eventually in jointly planning and controlling activities, schemes and courses relevant to their circumstances and needs' (Kevin Ward, *REPLAN Review I*).

Thus, while one view sees outreach as an extension of main-site activities, the other envisages the delivery of adult learning via inputs from different agencies acting in partnership and responding to locally articulated needs.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of the experience of this project and the themes and issues discussed in this report, the following recommendations are offered to prospective outreach colleges, LEAs and other relevant agencies:

- The Outreach College should recognise the importance of identifying the needs of unemployed adults by implementing local community-based needs analysis programmes aimed at different target groups of the unemployed in different localities.

- The Outreach College should recognise the value of the perspective of the potential outreach student and act upon it. The apparent non-vocational educational needs of unemployed adults as identified in this report may call for a reappraisal by many colleges of their marketing strategies and the redesign of provision to reflect non-vocational needs. Once students are on courses, practitioners can offer them practical skills development and at the same time maintain the option for them to progress to vocationally relevant learning as and when students develop confidence and deepen their interest. The aim should be to offer a flexible response to students' needs within the learning situation.

- The Outreach College should seek ways of strengthening links with outside agencies involved in giving advice and guidance to unemployed adults as well as taking its own counselling service to the community. This can be achieved by:

  — extending the role and function of existing college counselling services to include advice and guidance to adults outside the college who constitute future potential students;

  — working in close collaboration with external agencies involved in the provision of educational information, advice, counselling and guidance services. This project has had, and continues to receive, the active support of the LEA Adult Education Guidance Service. Other agencies can include careers and the probation service as well as some voluntary groups who offer advice as part of their functions.

- The Outreach College should incorporate in its outreach provision specific design features:

  — the need to establish a relationship of **equality** between tutor and students by using an informal, friendly and empathetic style of teaching;

  — curriculum content should be subject to **negotiation** between students and tutor where practicable;

  — the curriculum should be structured on a **modular** basis — self-standing short courses which enjoy a design-fit to other modular units at learning.

- The Outreach College should address the need to modularise elements of main-site provision. Progression to college for outreach students should be catered for by modular course structures within college.
- Outreach education should be seen as an integral part of the college curriculum and that this recognition be translated into stated college policy in its provision for unemployed adults.
- The commitment of senior college management to outreach provision should be sought and encouraged by their active participation and support in the planning, co-ordination and future development of outreach work.
- Staff development programmes and outreach support systems are devised and implemented in order to ensure that outreach tutors are able competently and confidently to address many of the problems which arise in non-conventional teaching settings.
- The Outreach College should recognise the need for, and ensures the adequate resourcing of, outreach development work as a necessary prerequisite to high quality outreach delivery.
- The LEA and the relevant district authority should acknowledge outreach development activity which contributes towards the regeneration and vitality of local communities. This endorsement should take the concrete form of joint funding or corporate resourcing of this type of community-based activity.
- The Outreach College should adopt a community-led approach to its outreach provision and incorporate this model as a strategic or long-term objective in taking education and training out into the community.
- The most effective way the Outreach College can develop a community-led emphasis to outreach is by networking. The active participation in networks can help to establish outreach provision in local communities and identify the college as a community resource. The Outreach College should therefore:
  - maintain a dialogue with staff in identified outreach teaching venues;
  - establish contact and communication with local professionals from a variety of statutory agencies;
  - establish contact and communication with representatives of local voluntary groups;
  - establish contact and communication with local groups of unemployed adults;
- The positive outcomes for the Outreach College in networking are:
  - effective identification of community-based needs;
  - establishing of relations of trust and co-operation;
  - recognition of the strengths of other providers;
  - collaboration and sharing of resources.

- The Outreach College should appoint a member of staff at the appropriate professional grade to the post of Outreach College Co-ordinator. Among the responsibilities of this post would be:
  - to liaise between the college and the community in a networking function;
  - to encourage the development of, and help maintain, local community-based educational planning groups comprised of different providers;
  - to work with the community in identifying and anticipating need;
  - to organise the relevant provision to meet effectively identified need;
  - to co-ordinate outreach staff development activities within the college, including monitoring and evaluation of provision;
  - to encourage an effective college-based response to outreach educational counselling needs by working with external educational guidance agencies;
  - to maintain the focus of the college in the community by ongoing development activities;
  - to have a teaching input to outreach provision where appropriate.

Adult Unemployment and The Curriculum A G Watts and E G Knasel, FEU, 1985

The Challenge of Change UDACE, 1986

Curriculum Development in the Education of Adults: A Manual for Practitioners FEU, 1984

Education for Unemployed Adults: Problems and Good Practice REPLAN/DES, 1984

Education from Everyday Living, Lindsay Frazer and Kevin Ward NIACE/REPLAN, 1988

Exploring the Educational Needs of Unwaged Adults Rennie Johnston, NIACE/REPLAN, 1987

Local Learning Centres ACACE, 1983

Survey of the Unemployed Cleveland County Research and Intelligence, October 1986

Understanding Each Other: Voluntary and Statutory Relations in the Education of Adults UDACE, 1987

THE PROJECT STEERING GROUP

Michael Clark Principal of Cleveland Technical College and Project Director.

Tom Kinneavy Project Co-ordinator.

Elizbeth Weightman Further Education Unit.

Pat Gale REPLAN Northern Region.

Paul McGee Cleveland County Development Officer for the educational needs of the adult unemployed and chair of the steering group to October 1987; afterwards as Action Co-ordinator, Cleveland County Unemployment Strategy.

John Roberts Cleveland County Development Officer for the educational needs of the adult unemployed and chair of steering group from October 1987.

Fred Rodgers Assistant Education Officer, Cleveland Local Education Authority.

David Rutherford Jobcentre Manager; East Cleveland group of Jobcentres.

Denis Samways East Cleveland Employment and Training Group.

Jacki Franks Cleveland Council for Voluntary Services.

Geoff Sharp Cleveland County Council Research and Intelligence.

Denis Burns Cleveland County Council Adult Education Guidance Service.

John Walsh Member, Langbaurgh Borough Council.

Ian Jeffrey Member, Cleveland County Council.

Dr Marjorie Mowlam Member of Parliament for the Redcar Constituency.

Linda Nicholson and **Jenny Hobson** were responsible for the clerical input to the project. Their support was given unreservedly and with great patience.

Cleveland Technical College in Redcar is carrying out a project called 'Outreach' which will take adult education and training to people in their local communities in East Cleveland, rather than have people travel into Redcar for courses. If you would answer the questions in this survey it will help us find out what types of courses people feel they need or would like to do, and where.

All the information collected in this survey will be treated confidentially.

We would be grateful if you could answer all the questions which apply to you.

Each question can be answered by either ticking the boxes:

YES ☐
NO ☐

or writing your comments in the space provided.

The course will help me get a job

First of all I'd like to start by just building up a picture of yourself.

1. Are you: Male ☐ Female ☐

2. Are you:
   - Married ☐
   - Single ☐
   - Divorced/separated ☐
   - Widowed ☐

3. Can you tell me which one of the following age groups you are in?
   - 18 to 24 ☐
   - 25 to 44 ☐
   - 45 to 64 ☐
   - 64 or over ☐

4. (a) At the moment are you:
   - Self-employed ☐
   - Working full-time ☐
   - On a Community Programme ☐
   - Working part-time ☐
   - Unemployed ☐
   - On a full-time education or skills centre course ☐
   - Retired ☐
   - Housewife ☐

[IF IN WORK GO TO QUESTION 5]

(b) How long have you been unemployed?
   - Under a year ☐
   - 1–3 years ☐
   - 3–5 years ☐
   - Over 5 years ☐

(c) What is your normal type of work?

5. How old were you when you left school?

15	☐
16	☐
17	☐

6. Some people had the chance to gain qualifications at school while others did not. Did you leave school with any qualifications?

Yes	☐
No	☐

If YES could you say what they were?

7. Thinking back to school, do you remember *the teaching* you received as being a good or bad experience for you?

Good	☐
Bad	☐

What was GOOD or BAD *about the teaching* you received? Can you explain please?

8. (a) Have you taken any sort of educational or training course since leaving school?

Yes	☐
No	☐

(b) Have you taken any sort of course at the Technical College at Redcar in the last three years?

Yes	☐
No	☐

If YES: What was the course? (up to two courses)

Course 1	
Course 2	

Did you complete the course(s)?

Yes	☐
No	☐

If NO: What made you leave?

(c) Are you taking any type of training or further education course at the moment?

Yes	☐
No	☐

If YES: Name of course	
Where held	

9. I am going to read out some things people say about why they don't go on courses at the Technical College in Redcar. Can you please tell me if you agree or disagree with them?

(a) I've got all the education and all the skills I need. [So, as far as you are concerned do you agree or disagree?]

Agree ☐
Disagree ☐

(b) I don't want to take a course at college because I never liked school.

Agree ☐
Disagree ☐

(c) It's too far to travel into Redcar from here; the travelling on top of the course takes up too much time.

Agree ☐
Disagree ☐

(d) Bus fares to Redcar and back make it too expensive, especially when you're unemployed.

Agree ☐
Disagree ☐

(e) I would hate to have to sit down in a classroom again.

Agree ☐
Disagree ☐

(f) At my age I am past the stage of wanting to learn new things.

Agree ☐
Disagree ☐

(g) You're no more likely to get a job after taking a training course.

Agree ☐
Disagree ☐

(h) I would feel nervous about going into a big educational building.

Agree ☐
Disagree ☐

(i) Most of the people who go to the Technical College are a lot younger than me, and I would feel out of place.

Agree ☐
Disagree ☐

(j) I don't really know what sort of courses they do at Redcar Technical College.

Agree ☐
Disagree ☐

(k) I don't have any, or enough, qualifications to get onto college courses.

Agree ☐
Disagree ☐

(l) I can't afford the fees.

Agree ☐
Disagree ☐

(m) Courses only seem to start once a year so I always end up missing the boat.

Agree ☐
Disagree ☐

(n) As far as I know, the college does not offer the kind of course I am interested in.

Agree ☐
Disagree ☐

10. As I said right at the beginning of the questionnaire, Redcar Technical College will be putting on some of its courses out in various local communities in East Cleveland, like your area for instance.

(a) Let's say you liked the idea, where would you prefer to take the course?

[Please write 1, 2, 3, etc. in order of preference.] ☐

At a local community centre ☐

At a local school in a part especially for adults ☐

At a working men's club or other clubs ☐

At a centre run by unemployed people (e.g. Skelton Impasse) ☐

At home by correspondence ☐

Other: please state ☐

(b) Would you definitely NOT do a course in any of these places?

If so which:

Can you say why:

(c) Would YOU be more likely to take an educational or training course if it were put on fairly near to your home?

Yes ☐

No ☐

If NO can you say why please?

11. The college has already made a list of courses and subjects which could be offered to people in their local communities.

(a) Which of the following do you think you need or would like to do — you can choose more than one.

[SHOW CARD TO RESPONDENT]

- Job-seeking Skills ☐
- Working for Yourself ☐
- Guesthouse Management ☐
- Shorthand and Teeline ☐
- Law course ☐
- Welfare Rights ☐
- Community Care ☐
- Prepare to Study (study skills) ☐
- New Opportunities for Women ☐
- Literacy/Numeracy ☐
- First Aid ☐
- Photography ☐
- Painting and Decorating ☐
- Joinery ☐
- Computer Skills ☐
- Understanding Unemployment and Other Political Issues ☐
- Prepare for a Degree Course in Humanities ☐
- Basic Electronics ☐
- Home Electrics ☐
- Basic Handtool Skills ☐
- Sociology ☐
- Psychology ☐

- Languages ☐
- Sports Coaching ☐
- English Literature ☐
- Geography ☐
- History ☐
- Politics ☐
- Economics ☐
- Music (performing music) ☐
- Dressmaking ☐
- Try'chem (fabric painting) ☐
- Any other course: ☐

(b) Which courses would be your first and second choices?

First choice:

Second choice:

(c) Is there anything not mentioned that you would like to do?

If so, please state:

12. Would you like us to let you know if and when courses start up in your area?

Yes ☐

No ☐

[If YES, write name/address below please.]

13. We are hoping to talk in a little more detail to a small number of people who have helped us with this questionnaire. Can we contact you later on in the year?

Yes ☐

No ☐

NAME: .....

ADDRESS: .....

.....

TEL. NO.: .....

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP

OUTREACH COURSE(S) SURVEY

This course you have just taken up is part of a project called 'Outreach' which is taking adult education training to people in their local communities in East Cleveland. Now that you are on an outreach course we would like you to complete this short questionnaire. It would help us plan and decide on future courses.

1. Where did you find out about this outreach course? (Please tick all that apply and write the details in the box below.)

   - Local newspaper ☐
   - Local radio ☐
   - Poster/noticeboard ☐
   - From a friend or relative ☐
   - From your involvement in a voluntary group, a community programme, unemployed group, etc. ☐
   - Other ☐

   Please write the details in this box (Which? Where? How?, etc.)

2. Have you ever done a further education college type course before?

   Yes ☐
   No ☐

   If YES, where?

3. Have you ever used this community centre before?

   Yes ☐
   No ☐

   If so, for what purpose?

4. What attracted you most to sign up for this course? Was it because ... (If more than one applies answer 1, 2, 3 in importance)

   - The course looked really interesting, just what I needed. ☐
   - The course was put on at a more convenient time/day than in college. ☐
   - The location of the course is nearer to home than is the college in Redcar ☐
   - I didn't like the idea of going into a big education building; this place doesn't make you feel nervous. ☐
   - Other ☐

OUTREACH COURSE EVALUATION SURVEY

Now that you have completed the Loftus 'Access' outreach course, we would like you to fill out this questionnaire. The results will help the college plan and improve future outreach courses like this one.

All information given will be treated in the strictest confidence

1. Are you: Male ☐ Female ☐
2. Are you:
   - Married ☐
   - Single ☐
   - Divorced/Separated ☐
   - Widowed ☐

3. Can you tell me which one of the following age groups you are in?
   - 18 to 24 ☐
   - 25 to 44 ☐
   - 45 to 64 ☐
   - 64 or over ☐
4. (a) At the moment are you:
   - Self-employed ☐
   - On a community programme ☐
   - Working part-time ☐
   - Unemployed ☐
   - Disabled ☐
   - Retired ☐
   - Housewife ☐

   (b) If you are unemployed, how long have you been out of work?
   - Under a year ☐
   - 1-3 years ☐
   - 3-5 years ☐
   - Over 5 years ☐
5. Have you taken a Redcar Technical College course before?
   - Yes ☐
   - No ☐

6. Below are a number of things students say are valuable aspects of 'Outreach' courses. As far as your course is concerned do you agree or not?

(Please tick one box for each statement.)		Agree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree
(a)	The course was offered much nearer home than at the college in Redcar.	☐	☐	☐
(b)	The time of the day fitted in with other arrangements.	☐	☐	☐
(c)	The course could lead to a qualification.	☐	☐	☐
(d)	You could have a say in what you did.	☐	☐	☐
(e)	The location of the course made me feel more at ease than if I went into a large college.	☐	☐	☐
(f)	The teaching was informal and friendly.	☐	☐	☐
(h)	I enjoyed meeting other people.	☐	☐	☐
(i)	Other(s) — please write in box.			

Which one of the above has been the most valuable aspect? (Please write in box.)

7. What personally do you feel you have achieved from the course? Do you agree or not with the following statements?

(Please tick one box for each statement.)		Agree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree
(a)	The course has improved my job prospects.	☐	☐	☐
(b)	I have developed more confidence in myself.	☐	☐	☐
(c)	I now have more knowledge and skills in the areas the course was concerned with.	☐	☐	☐
(d)	The course has made me a more interesting person.	☐	☐	☐
(e)	The course has enabled me to make more friends.	☐	☐	☐
(f)	The course has helped me develop a new interest.	☐	☐	☐
(g)	The course has given me a stronger belief in my ability to achieve educational success.	☐	☐	☐
(h)	Other(s) — please write in box.			

Which one of the above is the most important achievement to you? (Please write in box.)

8. While you were on the course did any of these problems or difficulties apply to you?

(a) Getting someone to look after the children. ☐

(b) General family responsibilities which came up during the course. ☐

(c) The course sometimes clashed with other activities (e.g. voluntary work, part-time work, etc.). ☐

(d) The course lasted too many weeks. ☐

(e) The course was held at a bad time of day ☐

(f) The sessions were too short; there was not enough time to cover the work fully. ☐

(g) There was not enough time to get to know the others on the course. ☐

(h) The course didn't cover the things I'd expected. ☐

(i) It was a lot harder than I expected. ☐

(j) I thought it would be more demanding than it was. ☐

(k) The teaching room/area was not very comfortable (if so, please explain). ☐

(l) Other(s) — please write in box.

Which one of the above was the most serious problem or difficulty — please write in box.

9. What changes would you make to an outreach course of this type?

10. Have you decided to take another course or are you seriously considering taking one?

Yes ☐
No ☐

If YES, what type of course:

11. Having done this course on outreach, do you feel any more ready to take a course AT THE COLLEGE IN REDCAR?

more ready ☐
less ready ☐
no difference ☐

12. Any other comments you would like to make about outreach courses?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP

STUDENT INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR USE WITH END-OF-COURSE SURVEY

> Note: Follow the student on the interview: follow his/her lead. No need to cover areas in turn as long as they are broached at some point during the interview. Also, personalise questions (e.g. 'How did you feel …?') and encourage extensive response (e.g. 'Tell me about …?')

Background and general information

Personal details:

i) age

ii) educational history and how long since last course of study?

iii) employment history and pattern of unemployment

iv) why this course here (and not one in college)?

v) outreach publicity: source, impact, effectiveness?

Main areas for interview

1. Organisational criteria	2. Course-related criteria
a) Outreach factors — refer to 'barriers' b) Length of course Length of sessions Location of course (the local learning centre)	Content — interesting – NEGOTIATION – appropriate Level — too high / OK / too low Was the course what you expected? If not, what did you expect?

3. Personal	4. Outcomes
a) Perceptions/expectations pre-course b) Perceptions/exceptions at start of course c) Perceptions of self during course d) Self-evaluation towards end of course (The above in relation to perceived learning, personal confidence and interaction with others)	a) Knowledge and skills in the course area b) Perceived personal effectiveness c) Changes in perceptions of FE d) Others?

STUDENT INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR POST-COURSE DESTINATION SURVEY
(Two months after course ended)

1. **Employment**

   - Has the course helped in any way in the search for employment? Might it in the future have relevance for job-hunting? If so, how?

2. **Education**

   - Any current educational activities since conclusion of the outreach course? If yes, how and in what ways has the outreach course helped in present course?

3. **Future plans**

   - Education/training.
   - Employment.

4. **Voluntary work or group participation**

   If yes, has the course helped this activity in any way?

   - How helped? [Probe]

5. **Reflections**

   A retrospective view of the course in general terms.

   - What, most of all, did you get out of it?
   - What do you remember most about it?
   - Was the course worth doing?
   - Would you recommend it to friends?

   [Try to help students expand on initial responses]

APPENDIX C: HEADS OF DEPARTMENT INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. **General policy**

   a) What is your department's view of education/training provision for the adult unemployed?

   b) What is the composition of your student population (e.g. employed/ unemployed; part-time/full-time; geographic locations; etc.)?

   c) Do you think your department should play any special role with the unemployed? Has it?

   d) How has the changing economic situation in East Cleveland affected your department?

2. **Policy-related attitudes to 'outreach'**

   a) In your view, is outreach a concept which would lead to greater involvement in education/training by the unemployed?

   b) Does your department have any experience of outreach provision — what is your assessment of that experience?

   c) In your view, does your department have any role to play in outreach provision? [If no, limited probe.]

   d) Please describe this potential involvement and outline what types of provision you could commit to outreach.

   e) From your position as head of department, what problems or constraints might be anticipated in ..... department provision 'going outreach'?

   f) How could these constraints be overcome?

   g) As head of department, how do you feel about clients eventually '... jointly planning and controlling activities, schemes and courses relevant to their circumstances and needs'?

   h) In general terms, do you think that educational and training 'needs' of largely unemployed people should be identified by providers or should providers respond to 'need' perceived by the unemployed?

   [Implications for content, length, structure, method, etc. of provision.]

3. **Resources**

   a) In a limited resource environment, what would you say are your priorities?

   b) Where would outreach provision figure in your order of priorities?

4. **MSC funding**

   a) What part does this funding play in decisions about your departmental provision?

b) What constraints and effects does it have?

c) Do you view this as a positive element?

5. **Staff**

a) On what basis do you allocate staff to classes?

b) On what basis would you allocate staff to outreach classes?

c) By definition, outreach involves teaching in non-specialist and unfamiliar teaching settings. Are there implications here for staff development?

d) What do you feel are the main requirements in staff development? What implications follow from these?

[e.g. timetabling specific staff development]

e) A major part of outreach teaching is that staff would exercise total responsibility for management, teaching, counselling and guidance within the local learning centre. Do you agree with this objective? [Probe]

f) This would inevitably mean you would be seen not so much as a key decision-taker in the traditional sense of head of department, but more as a resource for outreach teaching staff. How do you feel about this? [Probe]

6. **The future**

a) Historically, the college has served the needs of employed day-release students. Has the decline in such students effected changes in your departmental provision?

[e.g. short/modular/flexible provision, etc.]

b) What changes should occur?

c) How do you view collaboration with other groups outside the FE sector [e.g. adult education department, the WEA, voluntary sector, etc.] in provision of outreach education and training?

d) Should outreach provision be marketed any differently from normal college provision? How?

e) Do you feel there to be a long-term demand in East Cleveland for outreach provision from Cleveland Technical College?

f) Would you commit your department to such a contribution?

APPENDIX D: 'MONDAY WAS JOE'S DAY': ADULTS WITH SEVERE LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND OUTREACH FE

Two adults with severe learning difficulties joined the outreach electronics/domestic electrics course. At the end of the course, one of the two, Joe, was interviewed by the research worker with help from Di, Tom's key worker.

Joe was interviewed to try to find out how an FE course was received by an adult with severe learning difficulties and whether it was possible to evaluate such provision from the experience of the mentally handicapped. Indeed, one might reasonably ask if it were possible to identify and articulate any such perspective, at least in a way which might help FE organise and deliver provision relevant to the specific needs of this client group. For this reason, extracts from the interview are included. These sections of dialogue not only reflect the atmosphere on the course but offer us glimpses of the positive benefits which adults with severe learning difficulties can gain from such participation — benefits not identified in terms of educational outcomes.

Joe is about 48 years old. For more than 30 of these years his home, his community and his life were in a psychiatric hospital. At the beginning of 1987, Joe was placed in a community home, a base from which a process of rehabilitation could commence, and part of this process included his participation in FE. So how did Joe express his experience of the course? (In the transcript of the interview: T., research worker; J., Joe; D, Di.)

T. *The course lasted for three months. Did you think that it was long enough or could you have done with longer?*

J. Long enough.

T. *Just about right, was it? What about each time you went there?*

J. I had to get the bus there.

T. *Did you enjoy catching the bus there?*

J. Yes.

D. Yes. It was a great learning opportunity because before the course Joe wasn't able to catch a bus, and it gave him the opportunity to go up there independently, learn his money skills on and off the bus and learn his own road skills, because he actually had to take care of himself.

T. *How long was he on the course before he was able to travel alone?*

D. After about the first month. I think after about four bus trips. You did that all on your own basis, didn't you Joe? You were quite disappointed when the course finished. That meant the end of buses because there was no reason then for him to get the bus any more.

T. *We'll have to see if we can get another course organised so that you can start getting the bus again.*

T. *You said to Di that you liked the instructor, Alan. What was it about Alan that you liked?*

J. His jokes.

D. He had a sense of humour, did he?

J. Yes, he was funny.

T. *Yes, Alan said that he enjoyed teaching you and Anthony best because he got on well with you.*

D. Did you enjoy it?

T. *Did you find that the electrical work was interesting?*

J. I enjoyed cutting the wire.

D. You enjoyed cutting the wire and putting it in the plug, using your tools, didn't you find that a bit boring or was it good?

J. It was good.

T. *Did you connect any of the wires up to a plug?*

J. No, I just cut the wire.

T. *You just cut the wires and used some of the tools; had you used any of those tools before?*

J. No.

D. Had you ever used wire before, or seen the inside of a plug before?

J. Never used wire, but seen the inside of a plug; never tried it though.

T. *So you learnt how to work on a plug, and how to cut the wire. Did you cut yourself at all?*

J. With a knife, no.

T. *Did you feel nervous when you first went there?*

J. Yes.

T. *And then when you started going up more regularly, weren't you that bothered about feeling frightened?*

J. Yes.

T. *So you felt better about it, good.*

D. You liked meeting people, didn't you?

J. Yes, I like to meet people.

T. *At the end of the course did you think that it was a good thing for you to do?*

J. I did like it.

T. *So you're glad that you did the course?*

J. Yes.

T. *Do you think that you've learnt a lot from doing that course?*

J. Working on plugs.

T. *You didn't know how to work on plugs before the course then?*

D. You know how to use your tools now, and all the different coloured wires.

J. Alan showed me how to do it; there are all different colours.

T. *Do you feel better because you've done that course than if you hadn't done it?*

J. Yes.

T. *Do you feel that if you did a course again, you wouldn't be so frightened?*

J. I wouldn't be frightened at all and I'd meet new people.

D. Because now you've done this course you feel as though you've got more go and you'd like to do other things. Do you know what confidence means, Joe? It means not nervous, not frightened and you're willing to have a go. Do you think you would be nervous if you did another one?

J. No.

T. *Was there anything about the course that you didn't like?*

J. It was too long.

D. Do you think that was because you worried about missing the bus?

J. I didn't want to miss the bus, see.

D. Joe said this to me on a few occasions, that he was frightened to come out late in case he missed the bus.

T. *What did you like about the whole day, getting on the bus to go or coming back, or sitting in the classroom doing the course?*

J. Getting the bus.

T. *So you enjoyed the bus rides and doing the work on the wires and that, but you enjoyed the bus rides most.*

J. Yes, that's right, waiting for the next bus to come.

D. Doesn't say very much for the course though, does it?

T. *It does actually. Courses exist for a whole variety of reasons much more than the reasons that the course is designed for.*

D. It actually gets Joe outside, meeting ordinary people, mixing with the community, and it gave him a whole new range of skills that just didn't exist before: monetary skills, transport skills, road skills, social sight skills — I mean he's got to know what a bus stop looks like. These skills just don't exist at the hospital. Joe has actually had to learn.

T. *Which did you enjoy most, talking to people in the classroom or doing the work with wires and the plug?*

J. Talking to the people.

T. What sorts of things did you talk to the people about?

J. That I liked it there.

T. Do you feel that you can talk to people better now than before you went on the course, the people in here?

D. What Tom means is, are you frightened about just going up and saying hello to almost strangers? When someone says hello to you, can you say hello without feeling nervous?

J. No, I just say hello now.

D. So this course has taught you not to be as frightened.

J. Yes, it has taught me something.

T. Do you travel out much on buses now?

J. I can't get up to Middlesbrough by myself.

D. Have you travelled on a bus since you've been up to this course?

D. Once we went to the ATC [Adult Training Centre], didn't we?

D. There were only the two times but they were supervised.

T. So you haven't travelled by yourself on the bus since the Skelton Outreach Course; would you like to travel on the bus on your own again, Joe?

J. Yes, I would like to do it.

T. Will Joe lose those skills if he doesn't start travelling independently again?

D. We're trying to keep those skills open actually, trying to teach you to go to Middlesbrough, aren't we Joe, 'cause you've got parents there. So at the moment we're trying to teach him that bus route, so hopefully that will keep his skill open. Joe has got to have consistency where every Tuesday or whatever day the course was on — it was a Monday, wasn't it? — he actually went out and caught the bus himself, because you can tell the time can't you?

D. Joe likes to work at his own pace. If the course had been too fast then he wouldn't have been able to keep up with it, the sort of technical stuff if you like, and he was allowed to stay on at a certain stage until he mastered it.

T. Was that helpful when Alan told you to keep doing it until you wanted to do something else?

J. Yes, that's what he told us.

T. So he never said, 'Come on, hurry up, let's do something else'?

J. No, he's not like that.

D. So was that a good thing then, or would you've liked someone to say, 'Come on, let's do something else', or did you like working at your own pace in your own time?

J. Yes.

D. Why?

J. Alan didn't rush you.

T. Alan was very pleased with you and he enjoyed working with you and he still keeps talking about you quite a lot.

J. Behind my back.

D. Not nastily, nicely. It's nice when people say nice things about you.

T. So you thought Alan was a good person?

D. I never met him, Joe. What was he like?

J. He was a very kind bloke, nice to talk to. I always met him on the bus going there and he used to say hello.

D. What, did he catch the same bus as you.

J. Yes.

T. Was the bus very far away from the place where the course was?

J. Just across the zebra crossing.

T. Just across the road then, wasn't it?

T. I'm sure Alan wouldn't have let you miss the bus, would he?

J. I had to remind him on; he's got a bad memory; he forgets.

D. That's a nice thing to say about the tutor!

It would appear that the positive benefits Joe received from the course had little to do with its objectives as measured by outcomes such as constructing working circuits, appreciating the functions of components and competence in circuit testing. The benefits he received from the course have to be seen in the much wider context of personal and social skills development. Joe liked getting to the course rather than the course itself; he liked talking to the other people on the course rather than his work on the specific course content; and he liked the idea of working at his own pace, in his own time rather than at a pace or time prescribed by others. The sum of Joe's responses seems to constitute a general expression of his pursuit of personal independence. For Joe, the course represented an opportunity to assume some measure of control over his life and the chance to learn how to do so. In the interview he repeatedly returned to the associated ideas of travelling and of time — quite unsolicited by the interviewer — and for Joe this meant more than engaging in money transactions or in understanding bus timetables, important as these are. More fundamentally, perhaps, Joe found that he had a rare opportunity to identify, organise and manage a structure to his day. He devised his own personalised routine

which at its heart involved operating in the community, outside his normal sheltered environment. Joe's key worker gives endorsement to this view when she described his day as follows:

> 'Monday was his own individual day. He does do some voluntary work on a morning; he does gardening work down at Zetland Mews, which is a row of aged people's homes; and he just sort of generally helps out, and on a Monday he used to come back, he used to do his own dinner, used to catch the bus to go to his electronics course and come back and the whole day was at his own pace. He used to do his own work on a morning at his own pace, come back and cook his own dinner at his own pace and he used to go to his electronics course and do that at his own pace. The rest of the week he would slot into everyone else's timetable, but Monday was Joe's day. It seems a little sort of disruptive now that he hasn't got an afternoon, which is a shame isn't it?'

From her position as a professional carer for adults with severe learning difficulties, Di summarised the positive outcomes for Joe through his participating on the course:

> 'I think it gave him the opportunity to meet a great deal of different and ordinary people. It gave him the opportunity to mix in the community. He gained a great deal of skill, not just the transport ones but also skills in communicating with people and gaining more self-confidence in doing so.'

CONCLUSION

Between the course tutor, the care supervisor and care workers there was a convergence of views on the benefits Joe gained from the course. These included colour recognition, manual dexterity, money transaction skills, organisation of time and self, oral communication and, above all, self-confidence.

Some of these areas were no doubt partially in evidence before Joe arrived on the course and perhaps before he moved into his new home. The 30 years Joe spent in a total institution could not have been time spent vacuously. Such hospitals operate occupational or industrial therapy units where Joe would help manufacture small handicrafts and would no doubt pick up manipulative and other skills in the process. Positive as these initiatives are, they are not socially integrative, simply because they do not operate as part of normal community activity, but exist in an exclusive isolation. Less pointed, but sharing the same sense of exclusion, are the activities organised within ATCs for those with severe learning difficulties or by care workers for groups of such adults living in the community. The problem for ATCs and community carers is how to go beyond discrete activities and to seek those which can offer adults with severe learning difficulties a socially integrative dimension to their lives, by introducing them into activities which are shared with and participated in by ordinary people. It is the conclusion to this case study that FE can provide this dimension. By carefully identifying the right sort of course and by a supportive comprehensive policy towards staff development needs, small numbers of adults with severe learning difficulties can reach hitherto unrealisable potential which most of us take for granted.

The national policy of deinstitutionalisation of adults with severe learning difficulties and consequent increase in the numbers of small sheltered community homes has given them greater public profile as a specific group in many local communities. It also provides FE with the opportunity to explore and attempt to address the educational needs of this group. In particularly, in so far as such need relates to the further development of personal and social skills, FE can make a significant contribution towards rehabilitation into the community from which many have been excluded for most of their adult lives.

- By definition, outreach initiatives are community-based, and outreach courses utilise local facilities as teaching venues in order to make access to education easier for local unemployed adults. Outreach courses become appropriate vehicles for integrating adults with severe learning difficulties into the community because they are situated in a local environment which does not exude an institutional atmosphere. The identification of local educational need to be addressed by outreach should also consider the possibility of infill arrangements for such adults.

- In order that local educational initiatives do not exclude consideration of those with severe learning difficulties, a co-operative relationship needs to be established at a local level between the college and the various ATCs and community homes which operate in the same area. One way this could be achieved is via a local network of providers of educational and other services to adults. Such a network would provide a regular forum for the exchange of information and experiences, out of which could emerge a better understanding of the problems and strengths of member agencies; it could also provide the basis for future collaborative initiatives.

- Collaboration should not end at the local level. If the present policy of integration into community ways of living is to continue, collaboration on a wider basis and at higher levels is needed to augment the present work. At district, county and regional levels of administation, local government and health authorities could pool expertise and resources in order to orchestrate a more coherent response to the community-based needs of adults with severe learning difficulties. Collaboration at this level would mobilise greater resources and develop a more comprehensive response than even the finest of *ad hoc* local outreach initiatives.

- The steady and persistent increase in the numbers of adults with severe learning difficulties finding new homes and new lives within existing communities present a new challenge to FE in servicing adult educational needs. Many colleges have experience in working with groups of younger people with severe learning difficulties, though this has not been as extensive with post-school or adult students. If the process of rehabilitation continues apace, colleges will need to

respond to the needs of this group by developing a college policy towards such adults, and not rely on *ad hoc* arrangements. Such a college policy would reflect:

— the identification of responsible college staff to co-ordinate a cross-college approach and to liaise with the relevant agencies outside the college;

— the identification of relevant areas of provision which would enable positive infill arrangements to be made on both outreach courses and those delivered in college. Curriculum development work should also be undertaken to establish individualised learning packages;

— the identification of staff development needs in this challenging area of work, and the implementation of suitable programmes to meet those needs. A system of tutor support should be established to include periodic tutor counselling workshops and possibly the interchange of personnel between colleges and ATCs for adults with severe learning difficulties.

The following guidelines are taken from *Networking: A Resource Pack for Local Providers* (REPLAN, London and the South East).

1. Guidelines for setting up a network

1.1 Don't agonise. Get started.

Attempt a definition of purpose and identify those who are intended to benefit.

Starting with a conference/workshop to which as many people and agencies as possible are invited can prove successful.

Whilst a network is a fluid rather than static form of association it is helpful to define the area(s) of concern and the possible geographical boundaries.

Groups and agencies in the network are likely to have different aims and objectives. Identify the common aims and objectives to which the network as a whole can subscribe.

Identify specific issues and tasks to which all members can contribute.

Determine priorities for action.

Determine how the network will operate: meetings, newsletters, telephone contact, informal contact.

Be clear about the resource implications of an effective network: time, clerical/administrative support, facilitators, cost of effectiveness, etc.

Be independent of funding by, or reliance upon, one particular agency.

A good record system can help to facilitate activity and two-way information and communication.

Think beyond immediate needs: look at wide-ranging issues and develop a local strategy.

Extend, by networking into other networks.

Don't expect the network to last forever — new forms may be needed.

1.2 People and agencies who might be helpful at an initial conference/workshop designed to establish a network include:

- FE colleges;
- AE organisations;
- the Youth and Community Service;
- the library service;
- Social Services;
- voluntary organisations;
- the Training Agency;
- the Citizens Advice Bureau and other advice agencies;
- the probation service;

- trade unions;
- local projects;
- Jobcentres
- health visitors;
- the DSS;
- the Community Relations Council;
- schools/community schools;
- churches;
- the careers service;
- adult literacy/numeracy schemes;
- CP agencies;
- local employers;
- NACRO;
- ESL schemes;
- relevant local authority education and leisure services officers.

Again, this is neither an extensive nor an exhaustive list.

2. **What outcomes and benefits might be expected?**

2.1 For the individual:

- more and better information from which to make decisions;
- access to appropriate opportunities;
- opportunity to influence the system;
- sense of personal worth;
- mobility;
- membership of new groups;
- identification of new interests.

2.2 For the worker:

- diminished sense of impotence and isolation;
- greater effectiveness;
- recognition and appreciation — complementary roles;
- access to the expertise of others;
- improved 'marketing';
- professional development and training.

2.3 For the community:

- opportunity to collaborate towards common objectives;
- ownership of resources: expertise, physical reserves, finance, power;
- development and enrichment:
  - — support,
  - — initiate;
- voice for the community — recognition.

2.4 For institutions/organisations:

- more clients;

- capacity to adapt;
- credibility in communication;
- possible new resources;
- feedback for evaluation of performance leading to greater efficiency;
- basis for reordering priorities;
- focus for an overall strategy;
- improved image.

2.5 For the LEA:

- greater awareness;
- seen to be serving community;
- wider appreciation of needs of adults;
- better use of existing resources;
- forum to explain and gain support for policies;
- better information on which to advise and inform political decisions and effect change;
- evaluation on a broader base;
- co-operate between agencies/organisations;
- the wherewithal to mobilise community and voluntary organisations;
- a more significant profile in the eyes of the public;
- a mechanism for obtaining feedback.

FURTHER EDUCATION UNIT

Board of Management

Chairman

Allan Ainsworth, Personnel Manager, John Player Group

Members

Mr J Baker, Confederation of British Industry
Mr G A Brinsdon, Association of Metropolitan Authorities
Mr M Cross, Royal Society of Arts
Business and Technician Education Council
City and Guilds of London Institute
Mr G Kendall, The Training Agency
Mr D G Libby, Department of Education and Science
Mr L J Rees, Welsh Joint Education Committee
Mr G M Rowarth, Association of Principals of Colleges
Association of Colleges for Further and Higher Education
Ms C Sherriff, Trades Union Congress
Mr B D Short, Her Majesty's Inspectorate
Mr A F Warren, National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education
Mrs J Wisker, Association of County Councils

Observers

Dr F D Duffin, Department of Education, Northern Ireland
Mrs J Hall, National Curriculum Council
Mr J Howgego, Scottish Education Department
Mr R L James HMI, Welsh Office Education Department
Professor P Thompson, National Council for Vocational Qualifications

Secretary

Geoff Stanton, Chief Officer, Further Education Unit

Objectives

The objects for which the **Further Education Unit (FEU)** is established are to promote, encourage and develop the efficient provision of further education in the United Kingdom and for that purpose:

a) to review and evaluate the range of existing further education curricula and programmes and to identify overlap, duplication, deficiencies and inconsistencies therein;
b) to determine priorities for action to improve the provision of further education and to make recommendations as to how such improvement can be effected;
c) to carry out studies in further education and to support investigations of and experimentation in, and the development of, further education curricula and to contribute to and assist in the evaluation of initiatives in further education;
d) to disseminate and publish information, and to assist in the dissemination and publication of information, about recommendations for and experiments and developments in further education.

Address

2 Orange Street, London WC2H 7WE Telephone: 01-321 0433

ISBN 1 85338 133 0

© Further Education Unit (FEU) 1989

Reproduction in whole or in part of the contents of this publication is authorised for all non-commercial educational purposes, provided the source is acknowledged. Copies made for such purposes should not be recorded as part of any licensed copying scheme. All rights reserved with regard to commercial reproduction of the contents.

RP417

Printed by J. E. C. Potter Ltd., Stamford, Lincs.